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ABSTRACT

A Chinese view of China and the world is presented in this book, which is second in a series of two volumes which can be used in secondary and college courses. The reality of everyday life as experienced by the Chinese people is recreated in the series. Almost all of the material in both volumes has been written by Chinese and has been taken from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, and historical documents. Each primary source selection is preceded by an editor's introduction which provides background information and a few questions for class discussion. Volume two continues the theme of change by exploring the struggles and debates within China over economic development, the proper path for socialism, and the role of literature and art in society. This second volume is comprised of four sections. In the first section, "The Cultural Revolution," a student talks about the Red Guards, a young man tells how he became a writer, and a once idealistic young woman talks about the disillusionment of youth. The second section deals with "The Economic Revolution." Included is a fictionalized account of how a farming cooperative got started in one area, a criticism of some of the agricultural decisions made during the Cultural Revolution, and a description of a model worker in the Taching oil fields. The primary sources presented in the third section examine "Population, Pollution, and Health Care." "China and the World" is the topic of the fourth and last section of the book. Included is a letter which illustrates the arrogance of the traditional Chinese attitude toward foreigners, and excerpts from speeches showing the arrogance of Westerners once they had become dominant in China. (Author/RM)

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THROUGH CHINESE EYES

Volume 2

Transformation

Building a New Society

Revised Edition

PETER J. SEYBOLT

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For Cynthia, Taylor, and Amy

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Foreword

PEOPLE—AND NATIONS—have a tendency to look at the outside world from their own perspectives. This is natural and perhaps necessary, for we are all prisoners of a particular space and time. But how limited and boring one perspective can be! And how faulty and biased our information would be if we listened only to ourselves!

The main goal of THROUGH CHINESE EYES is to broaden our perspective by presenting a Chinese view of China and the world. Almost all of the material in these two books has been written by Chinese, and it has been taken from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, and historical documents.

Unlike most books about "other peoples," THROUGH CHINESE EYES does not try to *explain* China but to *show* it; it does not offer "expert" analysis by outside observers but, rather, attempts to recreate the reality of everyday life as experienced by the Chinese people. Interpretation is left to the reader. In effect, THROUGH CHINESE EYES has two objectives; to let the Chinese speak for themselves, and to let readers think for themselves.

Volume I, *Revolution: A Nation Stands Up*, begins with the story of the Communist rise to power in 1949, which led to perhaps the most spectacular social revolution the world has ever seen—and it is still going on. In only a handful of years, the Communists have been able to transform the lives of one billion Chinese, almost one quarter of the world's population.

Volume 1 focuses on the changes brought about in the lives of the peasants, the masses who make their living from the land.

It also presents material on recent changes in family life, religion, women's roles and politics.

Volume 2, *Transformation: Building a New Society*, continues the theme of change by exploring the struggles and debates within China over economic development, the proper path for socialism, and the role of literature and art in society. It also examines such issues as population growth, pollution, health care, and China's foreign policy. Volume 2 ends with a section on the Chinese American experience.

Historical material is interspersed throughout both volumes, providing a glimpse of China's rich past and at the same time indicating the continuity and contrast with the present.

In some ways, China may seem different from the United States, and indeed it is. But in many more ways, the Chinese as people are similar to people anywhere in the world. Human beings, no matter where they live, face the same basic needs: to eat, to work, to love, to play, to get along with their fellow men. Learning how the Chinese respond to these needs may teach us something useful for our own lives.

More important, getting to know the Chinese as people—sharing in their thoughts and feelings, their beliefs and aspirations—should help us to develop a sense of empathy, a feeling of identity, with human beings everywhere. In the end we should know more about ourselves—indeed, we should have an expanded definition of who we are—because we will know more about the common humanity that all people share. Self-knowledge is the ultimate justification for studying about other people.

LEON E. CLARK

Transformation

Building a New Society

Introduction

When the Communists came to power in China in 1949, they faced enormous problems. The country was in chaos after more than a century of warfare with foreign powers and decades of civil strife.

Since the Opium War in 1840, the Chinese had fought five major wars with foreign powers and numerous smaller engagements. The latest foreign war, an eight-year struggle (1937-1945) against the Japanese, had left the country weak and divided.

Agression from abroad had caused or aggravated internal problems in China. The Taiping Rebellion, 1850-1864, had claimed at least twenty million lives, and began a process of rural decay and political disunity that continued for a century. The political structure of traditional China, battered from within and without, collapsed in 1911. There followed decades of armed struggle in which no group was strong enough to eliminate its rivals and reunify the country.

When the Communists finally triumphed and established the Peoples' Republic of China in October, 1949, they faced an immense task. Agricultural production had been disrupted not only by warfare but also by the struggle to redistribute the land which had been the cornerstone of Communist policy during their rise to power. The ubran economy had stagnated under conditions of insecurity and mismanagement. Money had become worthless as policies of the previous Nationalist government under Chiang K'ai-shek led to uncontrolled inflation.

Poverty, ignorance and disease were endemic. Sanitation had broken down and disease was rampant. Malnutrition affected more than half the population. Opium addiction and venereal disease, a legacy of foreign imperialism, were major problems. Illegal secret societies and criminal rackets flourished during the years of political degeneration. The task of reconstruction was complicated for the Communists by the fact that in two decades of struggle with the Nationalists they had never controlled a major city. Suddenly, they had to manage the largest society on earth.

Their early successes were remarkable. By the end of 1952 they had thrown unwanted foreigners out of China for the first time in a century, stopped civil strife, carried out land reform and increased agricultural production to previously unattained levels, ended inflation, reactivated industry and commerce, initiated highly successful campaigns to wipe out epidemic diseases, brought criminal elements under control, and virtually eliminated prostitution, venereal disease and opium addiction. All this was accomplished through a combination of force, persuasion, and the willing cooperation of millions who welcomed the restoration of peace, productivity and national autonomy.

This does not mean the Communists had solved all of China's problems. China specialists often disagree about the effectiveness of various economic measures, or the justice of social reforms, or the ethics of the political system, and so on. And in China itself there had been an intense, sometimes violent, struggle to determine what the future course should be.

Basically, this struggle has involved two groups: those who favor class conflict and those who favor class harmony. Mao Tse-tung, the leader of the first group, believed that China must engage in a continual struggle against the elite classes if it ever hopes to achieve the Communist goal of an egalitarian society. He especially called for constant vigilance and mass criticism of those in authority who were not directly serving the interests of the masses. Moreover, he advocated class discrimination in favor of the peasants and workers rather than the elites who run the country. Only through constant class struggle, Mao felt, could Marx's vision of a classless society be realized.

On the other side are those who favor class harmony, following the lead of Liu-Shao-chi, Chairman of the government of China in 1966, and Teng Hsiao-ping, the preeminent leader in China after Mao's death in 1976. The supporters of the Liu-Teng line criticize Mao's emphasis on class struggle because, they say, it creates chaos, uncertainty and anxiety, making it difficult if not impossible for the leaders to lead. Also, they point out, it discriminates unjustly against the children of the old ruling classes and against the intellectuals who traditionally served as China's ruling elite. The Liu-Teng faction argues that mental workers are also workers, and that all citizens can contribute more effectively to socialism in China if they are free of the constant pressure of class struggle, provided of course that they follow Party guidelines.

Today the Liu-Teng approach holds sway in China, but for almost 30 years Mao's philosophy prevailed. As we have seen in Volume I of *Through Chinese Eyes*, Mao's leadership not only produced a Communist victory but it also led to a social, economic and political revolution that changed almost every aspect of Chinese life: ideology and religion; the status of women and the family; land ownership; and the role of peasants and workers in politics.

Volume II focuses on the struggle to determine policy in China. It begins with a chapter on the Cultural Revolution when differences of opinion clashed head-on. It then examines a number of issues surrounding literature and art, dissent, rural and urban economics, population, pollution, health care and foreign affairs. The volume concludes with a chapter on America as seen through the eyes of Chinese immigrants. We end, then, as we began, with the suggestion that we can learn about ourselves by looking at the world from another perspective.

The Red Guards

Editor's Introduction: The Communist Party has governed China for many years without permitting any real opposition from other political parties. But there have been serious disputes within the Party itself over what policies to adopt. In 1966 disagreements between two rival factions came to a head. The leader of one group was Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Communist Party. The leader of the other group was Liu Shao-ch'i, then President of the Government of the People's Republic, and also a high-ranking member of the Party.

The dispute between them was settled in a major upheaval known as the Cultural Revolution. Mao was backed by the army, but he did not use it directly to overthrow his enemies. Instead, he called on the students to shut down the schools and attack "people in authority" in the Party and government who were "taking the bourgeois road"—that is, people whose policies tended to favor the more privileged groups in society, contrary to Mao's "mass line."

The students responded to Mao's call with enthusiasm. They formed organizations known collectively as the "Red Guards" and, although they spent most of their time fighting among themselves, they managed to throw many high officials, including President Liu Shao-ch'i, out of office. The following account by a former Red Guard member—a high school student—indicates the power the students acquired. It describes the arrest by students of Yeh Fei, the first secretary of the Fukien Communist Party Committee and probably the most powerful person in Fukien Province.

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What was wrong with Yeh, according to the Red Guards? What does the discussion of the bathtub indicate about sexual mores in China?⁂

AT 9 A.M. SHARP on October 24, to the shrill sound of whistles, more than 1,000 fighters assembled in the compound and piled immediately into more than thirty trucks. We arrived at Yeh Fei's residence in less than ten minutes. The contingent from Amoy Eighth Middle was directed to guard the front gate, while those from the other schools were posted to keep a lookout for the security detachment stationed nearby for Yeh Fei's protection.

We knew that this No. 1 personage in Fukien had only five members in his family. His two daughters were away in the north attending universities, and at the moment only an adopted son, an orphan whose father had been a revolutionary martyr, was living at home with Yeh and Wang. The residence occupied a large area, with a fishpond, a little bridge, a flower garden, and a bamboo grove. The walls were topped with a barbed-wire fence.

We rushed directly into the living quarters. . . . Yeh Fei, his wife, Wang Yu-keng, their adopted son, and a little girl we did not know were at the breakfast table, with two servants attending. They must have stopped eating on hearing our footsteps, because they sat there motionless. As we entered the dining room, Yeh Fei's face turned white. He seemed to grasp everything at once and tried to feign composure. He took off his glasses and wiped them without a word.

"Yeh Fei, Wang Yu-keng, stand up! You are under arrest! We are the commandos of the 8-29 Revolutionary Rebellion-Making General Headquarters," Piggy shouted. We had never thought the job could be so easy. . . .

Pushing Yeh and Wang aside, we began our search. We neither handcuffed nor beat them; all we wanted was to seize their authority from them, not to take their lives. In our search we tried our best to keep things intact. We took many photographs to use as evidence. . . .

There were eight rooms in the house; the four upstairs consisted of Yeh and Wang's bedroom with private bathroom, Yeh's study, Wang's study, and the adopted son's room, while downstairs were the living room, dining room, a gymnasium, and the two women servants' quarters. An annex contained a kitchen, a bathroom, and three storage rooms. In the garage there were two black limousines. Outside in the garden there were fruit trees and a badminton court.

We divided the residence into ten areas—the eight rooms plus the storage rooms and surrounding garden—and split ourselves into ten small teams to take thorough inventory. Each item was registered, photographed and assessed in value. We even recorded the reading on the electric meter; the tiniest detail might prove to be revealing and just enough to tip the balance. During the past few months we had seized documents and collected files on Yeh and Wang and interrogated Yeh's close lieutenants, but nothing could be more concrete than what we were doing now.

Those responsible for searching the surroundings measured the total area, the height of the walls, the size of the fishpond, and recorded the number of fish and their probable origin and the kinds of flowers in the garden. They concluded that Yeh and Wang had used their position to build up an unusual collection of fish and plants. They also noted that the space occupied by Yeh and Wang was twenty times that occupied by an average worker. . . .

The first thing that struck us in the living room was the floor, inlaid with an elaborate flower design of different kinds of expensive woods that must have required a lot of people's labor. So we said to Mei-mei, "Imposing hardship on the people and squandering the nation's wealth! Take that down!"

We found more than one hundred bottles of expensive liquor and cigarettes and tea, almost all imported. Wang could not drink because she had high blood pressure. But where did she get all that expensive foreign liquor? When we asked her, she said they were gifts.

"Why did people give these gifts to you and not to me?"

Breastbeater asked. Wang Yu-keng would not answer this question.

We had to record the brands of liquor, cigarettes, and tea, but none of us could read English, so we had to ask Yeh Fei to identify the country of origin on the labels. He obliged smilingly; he knew them all. I stared straight into his eyes and said, "What are you smiling for? How can we have time to study English now when we're devoting ourselves to revolution?"

"I don't know English either. It's just that I'm familiar with the brands."

"You ghoul who sucks the people's blood! Do you know how many days' wages of a worker a bottle of this liquor is worth?" Piggy railed at him.

"These were given to me. I never have been able to make myself drink any because I see the toiling masses working so hard. But it would be a waste to throw them away. So I just keep them there."

We ignored his explanation and ordered him to hold a big batch of foreign liquor and cigarettes while we snapped his picture—to bear the caption "Yeh Fei, the ghoul who sucks the people's blood."

Suddenly, somebody upstairs shouted, "Come up and see how corrupt Yeh Fei and Wang Yu-keng are."

We all dashed upstairs to Yeh and Wang's bedroom. It reeked with fragrance, and in the wardrobe there were expensive cloth, high-heeled shoes, and a big stack of French perfumes. Whoever would have thought this old lady close to fifty was still so coquettish?

What really made us wonder was the size of the tub in the bathroom, larger than any we had ever seen.

"This must be where Yeh Fei and Wang Yu-keng bathe together," someone said.

Whereupon Wang was called in and asked whether this was so. She denied it, saying, "We moved into this house only about two years ago and I was then already well over forty years old. Would I still be disposed to do anything like that?"

彻底清算叛徒内奸工贼刘少奇的滔天罪行！

A criticism meeting at Peking University. (*From* China Pictorial, *No. 3, 1969, p. 9.*)

"I would worry that Yeh Fei might bring a girl secretary here."

"Oh, no. He leads a very austere life. I trust him."

"Dog fart!"

Someone suggested that we ask Yeh and Wang to try out the tub by bathing together now. Instead, we measured it to see how much wider it was than the usual tub, and although we had no solid proof that Yeh and Wang had indeed bathed in it together, we took pictures of the tub anyway as more evidence of their corrupt mode of life. These data were to appear on big character posters that very day, and the bathtub was to become the major attraction for visitors when the house was opened to the public.

Finally, all of us paid a visit to the storage rooms. They looked almost like an exhibition hall; Yeh and Wang had raked together from all over the country many art objects and scrolls of painting and calligraphy, which they had artistically arranged for display. From our interrogations of Provincial Party Committee cadre members, we had learned that Yeh Fei enjoyed bringing people here to see his collections, after which his subordinates would, of course, know what to present to him to win his pleasure.

We helped the team in charge of these rooms record and assess all the items. Although we all were laymen, we did know that the cost of art objects could not be estimated by their weight. Since there was no time to bring in experts, we marked down figures through sheer guesswork—$300 JMP,* $500 JMP—generally higher than we thought the items were actually worth.

It was past noon when we finished; Yeh Fei and Wang Yukeng had been on their feet for more than three hours. We concluded with an estimate of the total value of his property and compared it with his salary for the past ten years or so (ten times the wage of a worker). More than ten years before, when he had been first transferred from the military to a provincial post, he had come to Fukien empty-handed. Now he was worth several hundred thousand dollars JMP. More than nine-tenths of his property had come from corrupt activities and exploitation.

◆ *Editor's Postscript:* This Red Guard report points out a major reason for the Cultural Revolution, as well as some of the methods used. Mao wanted to shake up the Party and government because he feared that after seventeen years in power, many officials had lost their revolutionary ideas and were becoming a new class of bureaucrats, who were serving themselves rather than the people. If Yeh Fei is at all typical, Mao's fears seem to have been well grounded.

As for the Red Guards, Mao worried that the youth of China who had been born after the Communists seized power might not be good "successors to the revolutionary cause." Mao felt that they should learn revolution by making it. To a great extent, they directed local activities themselves, and they made many mistakes. They made indiscriminate accusations and attacks and frequently used physical force, contrary to Mao's specific instructions. A number of Red Guard units even attacked the military, which for a while stood by helplessly because Chairman Mao had ordered the troops to "support the Left" and not use weapons.

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* JMP, *Jen-min-pi,* Chinese currency. 1 JMP = $.50 U.S.

The Red Guards left chaos in their wake. They were inexperienced and so divided among themselves that they could not possibly create new institutions to take the place of the ones that they had destroyed. Eventually the army was commanded to restore order. It then took the lead in establishing "revolutionary committees" to replace the old administrative institutions that had been destroyed by the Red Guards. Gradually, the Party and government were reformed on Maoist lines, and the role of the army in administration declined. ❧

"How I Became a Writer"

Editor's Introduction: Literature and art were central concerns of the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, that great upheaval was identified as "cultural" because its main focus was on ideas and the expression of ideas. A *cultural* revolution was needed, Mao reasoned, because although the economic base of society had become socialist—the means of production were owned collectively or by the state—people's thinking lagged behind. Feudal and bourgeois tendencies toward selfishness, individualism and elitism were still prevalent.

The Communists, like their Confucian predecessors, regard literature and art as a powerful tool for shaping thought and action. In his "Yenan Talks on Literature and Art," delivered in 1942, Mao Tse-tung outlined the principles to guide writers and artists in the new society. During the Cultural Revolution Mao's wife, Chian Ch'ing became the principal arbiter of what was artistically acceptable. In her hands, her husband's restrictions on artisitc creativity were even more narrowly defined and rigidly enforced. Her ideas are epitomized in the following essay by a young writer Kao Yu-pao. What principles does he espouse? Do you feel that there is a contradiction between those principles and artistic excellence? Can a revolution be carried out without curbing freedom of expression?

In the old society I had no chance to go to school. Now the great school of the PLA [People's Liberation Army] provided me with excellent conditions for study. As soon as I knew

Kao Yu-pao, "How I Became a Writer," *Chinese Literature*, No. 6, 1972, pp. 111-17; abridged.

enough characters [written words] I started reading fiction, which thoroughly gripped me, just like the storytellers' tales I loved to hear as a child. Most of the books I read to start with were what we called "old writing," dealing with the emperors, princes, generals, ministers, talented scholars, and beauties of feudal China. Later, on the advice of the leadership, I read new books as well.

One of these raised this thought-provoking question: Why are all the main characters in the old writing members of the ruling classes, with not a single peasant among them? This was the case with the tales I had heard as a child, and with the old novels too. To me, this seemed a very pertinent question. Nobles, officials, and rich landlords had all lived off the sweat and blood of peasants or workers, like my family. Why, then, had no one ever written about *us*, the poor laboring people?

I found the answer to this question later with the help of my comrades by studying the *Yenan Talks*. Chairman Mao points out: "If you are a bourgeois writer or artist, you will eulogize not the proletariat but the bourgeoisie, and if you are a proletarian writer or artist, you will eulogize not the bourgeoisie but the proletariat and working people: it must be one or the other." These words provided the answer to my problem. Like a bright lamp, they lit up the path I should take, laying the ideological foundation for my writing *My Childhood.*

My Childhood is not an autobiography. I wrote it as a novel. According to the *Yenan Talks,* the life reflected in a work of fiction ought to be on a higher plane and more typical than actual everyday life. This involves concentrating the raw material of life and generalizing from it, to make it more typical. But because my first draft was restricted to my personal experience and lacked artistic polish and imagination, my portrayals of both landlord and peasants were superficial.

My comrades advised me to revise this first draft, basing the book mainly on my own experience but using other material as well. In the chapter "The Cock Crows at Midnight," Chou the Old Skinflint mimics the crowing of a cock to rouse his hired hands and make them start work.

Something of this kind happened while I was working for the landlord. Actually, he prodded the cock with a stick to make it crow, but I made him mimic a cock instead, so as to bring out his ruthlessness and craftiness more fully. In this chapter the hired hands discover what the landlord is up to and get their own back by pretending to take him for a thief and beating him up. I heard of such a case when I was small. Incorporating material of this kind made the story more dramatic, the characterization more vivid. In 1955, *My Childhood* was published.

After I had written this book, the Party sent me to middle school and then to university. As I entered the gate of the university, I was stirred by recollections of my childhood. To go to school had been my burning desire. I contrived once to borrow a book, intending to learn a few characters while tending pigs. As soon as the landlord saw that book, however, he seized it and tore it up. [My story] "I Want to Study!" decribes this incident. Now that my dream in the old society had come true in the new, this vivid contrast between past and present spurred me on to study hard for the Revolution.

Apart from my university course, I studied Marxist classics and Chairman Mao's works when I had time. A literary worker who wants to write revolutionary works must first be a revolutionary himself. As our great writer Lu Hsun said:

> To my mind, the fundamental thing for a writer is to be a "revolutionary." If he is, then no matter what he writes about or what material he uses, it will be "revolutionary literature." All that gushes from a fountain is water; all that flows from blood vessels is blood.

To be revolutionaries, we must make a good study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung thought. This is the major subject which all revolutionaries must study faithfully.

After graduating from university, I went back to the army, in accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching:

> China's revolutionary writers and artists, writers and artists of promise, must go among the masses; they must for a long period of time unreservedly and wholeheartedly go among the masses of workers,

peasants, and soldiers, go into the heat of the struggle, go to the only source, the broadest and the richest source.

Although I came of a worker-peasant family, I realized that my thinking and feeling were not quite the same as those of workers and peasants. Besides, life itself was developing and changing. New people and things were constantly coming to the fore. I was familiar with the life of the past. But to mirror our new age, I must familiarize myself with the new society and new people, must draw fresh material from life. The Party branch of our unit backed me up in this, and arranged for me to go and experience life in villages and factories . . . .

Life among the masses helped me to remold my thinking. It supplied me with material for writing, too. One day I went ploughing with some peasants. During a break for rest they fell to discussing "The Cock Crows at Midnight," and an old poor peasant recounted a similar story about a landlord who roused his cocks at an unearthly hour. In this case, however, the hired hands banded together to burn down the landlord's barns and then ran away. This episode held a valuable lesson for me, deepening my understanding of the revolt of the proletariat and laboring people against the old social system, and the nature of their struggle. When I re-read *My Childhood*, I realized how inadequate was its portrayal of the nature of different class characters, how limited, shallow, and inaccurate was its reflection of reality. I made up my mind to revise the book again.

I rewrote "Solidarity Among the Hired Hands" according to the account of the old poor peasant. Originally, I had described how the hired hands' solidarity thwarted the *pao* [neighborhood] chief's efforts to discover who was responsible for beating up his father, and by way of reprisal he had them all sent off to do conscript labor. In my altered version, I laid stress on the courage, resourcefulness, and spirit of revolt of Kao Yu-pao and the other hired hands. In keeping with this, I added certain details to bring out more vividly the cruelty of the negative characters.

I changed the ending of the story too . . . . Originally . . .

Chinese and Western art forms characterize the new culture. This is a shot from a ballet film called "The White-Haired Girl." (From *Chinese Literature*, No. 7, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972, p. 102.)

Kao Yu-pao's family are forced to flee as refugees to Talien, but finally hunger drives them back to their village. That was a thoroughly depressing ending. In the present version Kao Yu-pao, on the advice of some workers, goes to Shantung, where the Party has organized a base of resistance to Japan. The implications of this are more positive, exemplifying the fighting spirit of the laboring people . . . .

Summarizing my development as a writer has brought home to me one truth: Important as is the writer's own experience of struggle, it is only a drop in the ocean compared with the revolutionary practice of the worker-peasant-soldier masses. "The life of the people is always a mine of the raw materials for literature and art . . . . They provide literature and art with an inexhaustible source, their only source." A writer, no matter how talented, if he cuts himself off from the revolutionary struggles of the people, will be unable to write works that they welcome and that give a profound reflection of life. For this reason, literary and art workers must go deep among the masses for long periods of time, taking the road of integration with workers, peasants, and soldiers.

More than twenty years of experience have completely convinced me that Chairman Mao's *Yenan Talks* are like sunlight and dew, nurturing the growth of revolutionary writers and artists. And the revolutionary struggles of the broad masses, our best teachers, are the rich soil in which we grow.

The Disillusionment of Youth

Editor's Introduction: It is probably fair to say that the great majority of students who participated in the Cultural Revolution acted out of idealism. They were convinced that they were in the vanguard of a movement to purge China of corrupt officials and "feudal" ideas and move a step closer to the ideal egalitarian society. When government institutions and the Communist Party itself collapsed as a result of their actions, the People's Liberation Army finally moved in to restore order.

The army had always been the decisive factor in the struggle. Under its commander, Lin Piao, the army had supported Mao's Cultural Revolution, allowing the students free rein for a while. When it took the initiative from the Red Guards, it became the nucleus of "revolutionary committees" formed to replace fallen government institutions. But Lin Piao had ambitious plans of his own. The Chinese now say that in his quest for power, he tried to assassinate Chairman Mao in 1971 and establish a military dictatorship. They report that he was killed when his plane crashed en route to the Soviet Union where he tried to flee after his plot was discovered.

Following Lin's death, Party and government agencies were reestablished, but a ferocious power struggle continued behind the scenes. The faction that was dominant most of the time until Mao's death, in 1976, was led by Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing. She and three others, subsequently known as "The Gang of Four," favored the policies of the Cultural Revolution, particularly the vigorous promotion of class struggle. Immediately following Mao's death, they were arrested by Mao's replacement, Hua Kuo-feng, who

Cheng I, "Land and Ocean I Am Grateful to You," *Chinese Youth*, No. 7, 1980. Translated by John Hsu.

accused them of high crimes against the state. At their trial in November, 1980, they were charged with murdering or "persecuting to death" 34,800 people in their quest for power. All four were found guilty. Chiang Ch'ing was given a death sentence, suspended for two years, pending a change of attitude and behavior.

The other faction, led by Teng Hsiao-p'ing, became ascendant after Mao's death and immediately set about reversing most of the policies and programs of the Cultural Revolution. All of China's problems were now blamed on Lin Piao and the Gang of Four, and even Mao was subject to considerable criticism and blame. Lin and the Gang were held responsible for distorting Maoism and making it a religion which no one dared contradict. The new leadership called for demystification of the cult of Mao under the slogan "seek truth from facts," but at the same time, it put its own limits on truth seeking by restricitng the factual data that one could consider. For instance, few would dare to suggest openly that the activities of the Gang of Four were motivated by any but the basest motives.

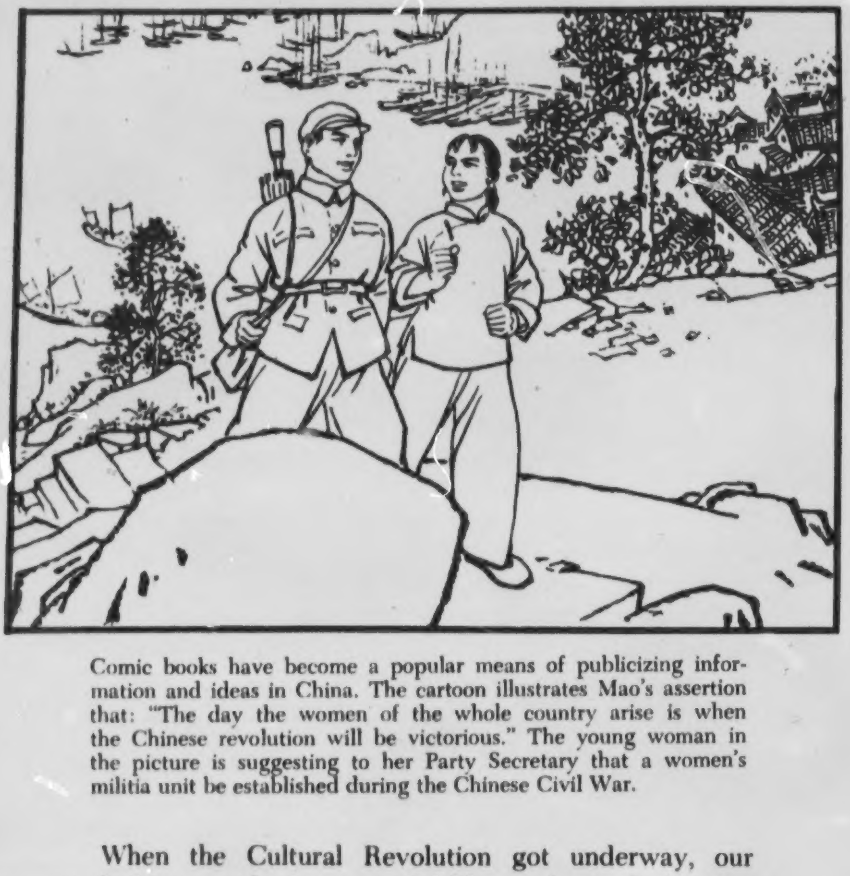
It is little wonder that these events left many people, particularly young people, cynical about politics and about life in general. The general disillusionment of youth in China has been of great concern to the leadership in the 1980's. Illustrative of the problem is a series of letters on "the meaning of life" published in the journal *Chinese Youth*. The series was initiated by a once idealistic young woman, Pan Hsiao, who had lost all faith in the Communist Party and the Chinese government and had come to view life as a selfish struggle for personal gain. Her letter to the journal was answered by thousands of others expressing both agreement and disagreement with her position. The following selection is from one of those letters. It reads like the collective biography of the youth of the Cultural Revolution generation. The author, contrary to Pan Hsiao, has regained his idealism. On what does he base it?

Dear Comrade Pan Hsiao:

How are you?

I am the author of the short story "Maple." I don't know whether you have read it or not. The story depicts the younger generation's idealism and heroism tinted with modern religious superstition during the Cultural Revolution. It can be said that it epitomizes the spirit of that era. The story is not well-written, but I can guarantee one thing: it is true to life.

This generation of ours spent our early youth in a comparatively stable society. With their exploits, heroes like Lei Feng and other models for young people imbued our crystal-like hearts with the lofty and magnificent idea of "revolution." With great eagerness, we studied Mao Tse-tung's Thought and were ready at any time to dedicate all we had to the Chinese revolution and the world revolution.



Comic books have become a popular means of publicizing information and ideas in China. The cartoon illustrates Mao's assertion that: "The day the women of the whole country arise is when the Chinese revolution will be victorious." The young woman in the picture is suggesting to her Party Secretary that a women's militia unit be established during the Chinese Civil War.

When the Cultural Revolution got underway, our revolutionary enthusiasm erupted like a volcano. Swimming with the tide and obeying the orders of the proletarian headquarters, we plunged into the whirlpool of struggle. Finally, however, history mercilessly displayed before us the harsh reality. In the face of these bloody facts, all the lies and deceptions became obvious one after another. The myth about the sanctity of Mao Tse-tung's Thought exploded, and so did the deity himself. Ideas, life, hope, and courage were all ruined.

I had been most eager to pitch into the struggle. Being concerned about the nation's destiny, I ran across several provinces and municipalities, joining the youthful forces of the Cultural Revolution. B[illegible] I saw the killing of more than 2,700 people in the so-called struggle by violence in a small prefecture called Luzhou. In addition dozens of boats and ships were sunk or destroyed. Could this have been done for the sake of "revolution" as conceived by the people?

Like you, we were seized by all kinds of anxiety and misgivings. But as we studied Chairman Mao's exhortations to "combat selfishness and criticize revisionism," we piously criticized our hesitation and wavering as simply a manifestation of a *petit bourgeois* mentality. Therefore as soon as we young people were called upon to resettle in the countryside, we all eagerly signed up without any reluctance. Everyone was determined to integrate himself with the worker and peasant masses and to reform the "deep-rooted bad habits of the *petit bourgeoisie* " by doing arduous labor.

Among my schoolmates who went to Taigu County, Shansi Province, some had deformed legs, some had chronic diseases, and others were under the age requirement for living and working in the countryside. They had applied many times before they were approved. Some even wrote application letters with their blood. A batch of us, some thirty in number, were assigned to a commune named Pingchuan. We did not accept the assignment, but went to see the leader in charge, asking her to send us to a commune where conditions were the most difficult. At first, she mistook our request as an expression of dislike for the commune to which we were assigned. She explained to us again and again that the commune was not bad and one could get high bonuses there. When she finally understood our intention, she was so moved that for a while she was unable to utter a word.

In this way we came to a mountainous commune in the remotest part of Taigu County, the only commune that did not have electricity. As soon as we put down our luggage, we went through the village, visiting the poor peasants and presenting to every household Chairman Mao badges and his works. Braving the coldest weather in a year in that highland, we took up our hoes early the next morning to dig up the earth and fill the gullies in order to reclaim land for agriculture. Thus, in a little mountainous village of only nine families located in the chain of Taihang mountains, we started our difficult life as rusticated youths with high spirit and vigor.

My friends and I were deeply grateful for being resettled in the countryside. It brought us from the dazzling blue sky of idealism down to the cold and harsh earth of reality. Rustication opened our eyes for the first time to the real countryside in China not to be found in propaganda, and to the peasants' real feelings of joy, anger, sorrow and happiness.

With the courage of being ready to gulp down all the sufferings of the world at once, we pitched into the struggle to remake nature. On the first day alone I broke several hoe handles while digging with all my might. At the risk of my life, I used a wire only ten meters long as a detonating cord for dynamiting rocks. In spite of the production team leader's dissuasion, another schoolmate and I jumped into the mountain torrents to salvage timber owned by the collective. Some schoolmates experimented in growing rice in the mountainous region despite the difficulties. Even our girl schoolmates carried on their shoulders rocks and manure buckets, and so did the schoolmates with deformed legs. Instances like this are too many to enumerate.

Nevertheless, our blood and sweat were of little avail. Our ideal of building a socialist new countryside suffered severe setbacks under the "left" deviationist line which called for "evaluating one's work according to political performance" and "conducting agricultural production by exercising proletarian dictatorship."

Resettlement also helped us to sober down for the first time and reflect on the Chinese Revolution. When looking at Peking from afar, we were pained to find that the end result of the Cultural Revolution was not a much better society as had been promised. The so-called "capitalist roaders" were toppled, but in their place emerged a feudal, fascist dictatorship we had never seen before. Lin Piao's attempted coup especially shocked us like a thunderbolt. Any apology or excuse could in no way cover up the lightning that made our souls tremble. We were faced with a deep spiritual crisis!

Some schoolmates were unable to stand a life of deception and loss of faith. They committed suicide as a protest, though a thin voice it was against society. Some sank into degradation, engulfed in the turbid waves of life. However, there were still quite a few comrades who started thinking things out on their own; they were searching for answers from the realities of society and Marx's works. We did physical labor in the daytime and conducted extensive and in-depth social surveys. At night we read and studied. For a period of time, we had only one kerosene lamp and had to make do by reading in three shifts. Some read while others went to sleep. In the dimly-lit cave, we took turns studying until daybreak.

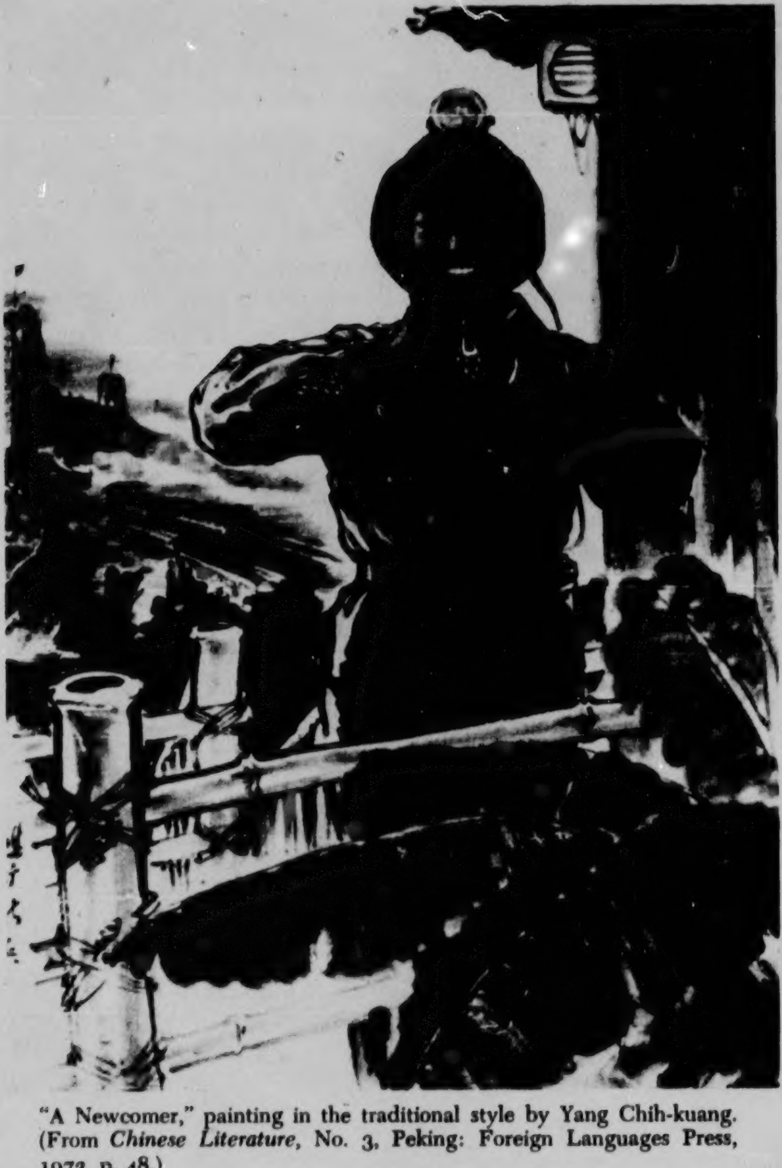
I had been the most pious and therefore was also the most disappointed. Confronted with harsh realities, my girl friend nearly committed suicide, and I went to the north of the Shanhai Pass and roamed about in the forests of the Xing-an Mountains and in the prairies of Hulunbeier. I took up odd jobs and did hard labor. I carried with me a set of carpentry tools and wrapped myself in a worn-out dog hide. My satchel was filled with works by Marx, Feuerbach and Huxley. I wanted to see the world, I wanted to find out from my 3,000-mile journey and from the sweat and toil I spent in dozens of towns and villages something true and reliable.

Some of my friends wrote economics essays to criticize theories advocated by Lin Piao and the "Gang of Four" concerning the basic economic law of socialist society, and because of this they were placed under surveillance for quite a few years. Still others took up the pen, broke through literary blockades, and produced a number of poems and articles opposing Lin Piao and the "Gang of Four." These hand-copied manuscripts soon got around and became "underground literature" of considerable influence at that time. In this way the old religion fell apart like an avalanche, while a new faith was still in the difficult process of being conceived.

There has never been a generation, I dare say, that has experienced such terrible spiritual collapse and mental torture as we have. Our revolutionary predecessors, once they discovered the truth of revolution, threw themselves into the people's cause, courageously and faithfully carrying on the struggle. They did not have the pain of wavering and losing faith that we have experienced. To whom could we turn? The "Gang of Four," by stealing the name of the leader and the Party, had everything under their control and monopolized the right to interpret Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung's Thought. In the darkness we could only explore Marxist theories on our own, groping forward in a painful mood of negating the past.

We are grateful to the vast expanse of life in society. At the bottom of society we experienced an acute and complex struggle marked with the characteristics of the new era. We were maturing, embracing again the great truth of Marxism. We are now espousing a Marxism that is no longer superstition shrouded in the halo of myth, nor the means and tool which certain conspiratorial cliques employed to exercise an "all-round dictatorship" over the people in order to strengthen their rule of feudal fascism. It is a scientific world outlook, the truth for the emancipation of all mankind! We are grateful to the deep ocean of the people! They are like a mother to us and it is in their arms we have healed our wounds, returned to life and drawn courage and strength.

This is the history of how we changed from a generation of blind and pious faith to a generation of tenacious thinking. Some older comrades understand this, but some news media and leadership just make endless accusations against us. I have no intention of defending our conduct; rather, I only want to make a relatively objective review of history. True, there are hoodlums, thieves and murderers among us. But whenever I call to mind this generation of ours, first to appear before my eyes are a group of kind and generous laborers. I cannot go against my conscience and show disappointment in them. This is because I understand them. I know for sure they hate evil like an enemy, and behind their sometimes extremist language is a child's innocent heart beating for the motherland, the people and the Party.



"A Newcomer," painting in the traditional style by Yang Chih-kuang. (From *Chinese Literature*, No. 3, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972, p. 48.)

Just as every generation has its own merits and shortcomings, we, too, have many drawbacks and problems. For example, we lack a sense of duty, a sense of being the masters of the country. We are not constructive in nature and are short of cultural cultivation. We have done more destruction than construction, and we are skeptical about more things than we affirm. But if we analyse the matter in a materialist perspective and assume that all this came as a result of a social life which had been turned upside down, then after having smashed the "Gang of Four," we have reason to believe that in a stable and united social environment all these problems can be solved step by step under positive guidance.

Comrade little Pan, it is my feeling that you have not truly seen through life. For thousands of years humans have tenaciously searched for the value of existence; they seek the truth of life, pursuing the true, the good and the beautiful. You are only 23 years of age and your experience cannot be regarded as profound and mature. It is inappropriate for you to blurt out that you "see through" everything. Your understanding at this stage is only one phase of your life. You will not stop at this point and your path is by no means narrowing. Precisely because you are persistently exploring and are not fearful of hardships, you are standing at the threshold of truth. It is possible for you to find a valuable life and thus become a most enthusiastic and valiant fighter. Of course we cannot rule out the other possibility. Don't hide yourself in love, and don't evade the crisis of your faith, but move forward to meet it head-on. Your age is the best time to solve the problem of your outlook on life. If you turn from it, you will achieve nothing in your whole life. If you step up to it and find a good solution, you will sweep forward irresistibly like water pouring from a steep roof.

The Paupers' Co-op

Editor's Introduction: Agriculture affects almost everything in China: nutrition, health, industry, foreign trade and politics. The debates over literature and art, as important as they were to the Cultural Revolution, were nowhere as important, ultimately, as the debates over agricultural policy.

Eighty percent of China's one billion people live in the countryside. As we have seen in Volume I, the revolution overthrew the traditional landlord system and redistributed the land to the peasants. Unfortunately, land reform did not solve the economic problems in the rural areas. Farmers were given small, inefficient plots of land to work, and most of them had no recourse but to sell their new land and become tenants again. The alternative was to move to overcrowded cities where jobs were scarce or nonexistent.

The Communists' solution to this dilemma was to form collective farms. The goal was to create larger, more efficient farms and thus encourage peasants to stay in the rural areas. The following selection, "The Paupers' Co-op," is a fictionalized account of how a farming cooperative got started [illegible] one area. It describes the benefits of cooperative effort and the obstacles that must be overcome to attain it.

As you read "The Pauper's Co-op" bear in mind that stories of this sort—sometimes called "new socialist literature"—were

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Tang Keng-liang, *The Paupers' Co-op* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), abridged.

originally written not for us but for the Chinese. The purpose of such stories is to teach a lesson or provide a model of good conduct. What values are being promoted by this story? What is the role of the Communist Party? What are its methods?

IN A CERTAIN county of Hopei stands a mountain called Ch'ang-yu, and in the valley below lies Ch'ang-yu Village, a village always known for its poverty: poor hills, poor water, poor soil, and poor people, too. . . .

The village had 154 households, but three out of four consisted of poor peasants or hired hands, of whom several dozen had to beg for a living.

Soon after Liberation came land reform, when the poor and lower-middle peasants were given some land of their own. But lack of tools, draft animals, fertilizer, and funds made it impossible to grow good crops or to cope with drought and flood. Some of the former poor peasants and hired hands found themselves having to sell their newly won land.

The few [Communist] Party members in the village cudgelled their brains day and night to think of some way out. One of these, Wang Ku-hsing, was a big, burly man and a good farmer. He foresaw that the 1952 crop failure would make it hard for the villagers to last through the winter; and it would be a disgrace if they had to apply to the state again for relief. . . .

Wang went to see District Party Secretary Tsao. He was back the next morning and told Tu Hung, "Good news!"

"What good news?"

"The district cadres are examining some directives on agricultural cooperation. They want to have another try at setting up a few co-ops. Secretary Tsao said, 'So long as we poor stand together and follow Chairman Mao's line on agricultural cooperation, we can join forces in co-ops. If we pull together we can make the earth produce gold. Step by step we'll shake off our poverty.' "

"Very good," cried Tu. "I've been wishing we could have a co-op ever since I heard that other districts were trying them. We must make a go of it."

Wang called together all the Party members to pass on Secretary Tsao's advice. Then they went off to try to persuade the villagers to form a cooperative.

This wasn't easy. Why not? Because co-ops were something new. No one had any idea what they were like or what their advantages were. So most of the peasants had doubts.

Some said, "If so many people are thrown together there are bound to be quarrels and fights, even families breaking up."

"Several dozen households farming together? They'll never agree. Everything will be messed up."

"Too many cooks spoil the broth. Too many sons means none support their father. We're better off without co-ops."

But the Party members didn't lost heart. They went on canvassing. And finally twenty-three households agreed to take the cooperative road proposed by the Party.

"Good," said Wang. "We'll start with twenty-three households. If we make a go of it, others will want to join."

A meeting was held to set up the co-op. The twenty-three families who went saw at once that they were all poor peasants, the poorest in the whole village. This really was a Paupers' Co-op. They elected Wang as chairman and Tu as vice-chairman.

When they reckoned up their assets, the co-op owned nearly forty acres of land, but no draft animals at all except for three legs of a donkey. Three legs of a donkey? Well, this donkey was the joint property of five households. Four of them had joined the co-op, but not the fifth; so one leg of the donkey didn't belong to the co-op. That meant they had a three-quarter share in this donkey. And not having a single ox or cart, how were they to till the land? . . .

"Of course, we've got hands," said Li. "But where's the money for animals and carts to come from?"

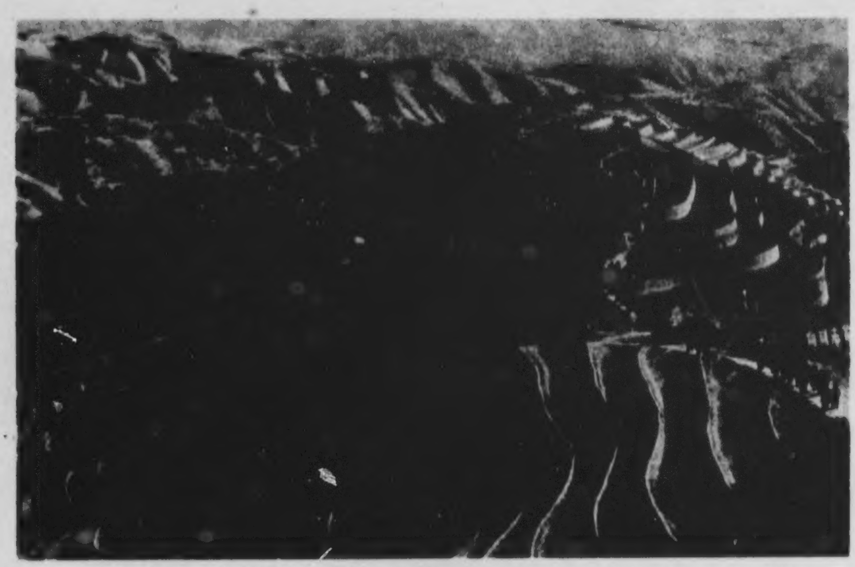
Wang pointed out of the window. "There! Animals, carts, tools—we'll get the lot up there!"

All eyes turned to the mountains ten miles away. They couldn't for the life of them see how they were to provide animals and carts.

"The mountain's covered with brushwood, isn't it?" Wang continued. "Cut some and sell it, and we'll be able to buy all we need.". . .

In twenty days they cut more than twenty tons of brushwood, which they sold in town for 430 *yuan*. Was everyone pleased! These paupers had never handled so much money. . . . Instead of sharing out the money, they went to town and bought an ox, a mule, a cart, and nineteen sheep. The whole co-op exulted over the purchases. . . .

[W]illing as the paupers were to work, they were still hard up, and long before harvest time they ran out of grain. Some cooked a whole basket of greens with a handful of rice; others had nothing at all to put in the pan. When Tai Ming collapsed in the fields from hunger, Wang took him home and made him a broth of the last few beans in their house. He and his wife now had to make do with wild plants.



The fruits of collective labor—water conservation, erosion control, and increased crop land. (From *China Reconstructs*, January, 1973, p. 9.)

Hunger affected the co-op members' work and their morale, too.

Li Ying started grousing in the fields, "If I hadn't joined the co-op," he said, "I could have sent my son out as a hired hand. That way I'd have had one less mouth to feed and some cash at the end of the year. Now we haven't so much as a grain of rice, yet he expects us to feed him."

Li Ying's boundary stones were in the way of the plough, and one co-op member started to move them away. But Li growled, "Don't waste your time shifting those. After the autumn harvest I'm leaving the co-op. I'd only have to lug them back again."

Later someone urged Wang, "Let's pick some of our unripe crop, Old Wang, just enough to keep us from starving!"

"And spoil our harvest? No!" said Wang. "We must tighten our belts now to reap more grain later on. We'll find some other way out."

The Party members talked it over and solved the problem again the poor man's way. They could cut brambles, strip the leaves off for compost, and sell the stems to buy grain. . . .

The Party had taken an interest in this new co-op from the start. When the district Party secretary learned of its predicament, he hurried to Ch'ang-yu Village with a loan.

"Don't worry about us, we're all right," said Wang. "I guarantee no one will die of hunger!"

"All right, are you?" retorted Tsao. "You're as pale as a ghost, man!"

Wang covered his face with his hands and laughed. "That's my natural color. I'm not hungry."

"Not hungry? You haven't eaten a grain of rice for days."

"I don't mind missing a few meals if the co-op can grow strong enough so that none of our members need ever go hungry again. Besides, the Party and the government have much bigger problems to cope with. We don't want to add to their burden."

With Party members like these, who always put others

Collective harvest. (From *Jen-min hua-pao,* 1971, Nos. 7–8, pp. 20–21).

first and work so whole-heartedly for the common good, thought Secretary Tsao, they're bound to make a success of the co-op. "Comrade," he said, "if people have problems, it's up to the state to help. Buy some grain with this fifty *yuan*, and go on finding ways to tide yourselves over. If you succeed, co-operation will take root in this poor mountain valley. And that will be wonderful."

They bought grain for the co-op with the loan. Deeply touched, one member fingered the grain and declared, "They say that nobody is as dear as a mother. But the Party cares for us better than a mother. Just in the nick of time the Party's sent us this loan to see us through."

The co-op's maize grew tall and strong. By harvest time each cob was about a foot long, as plump as a pestle, and covered with symmetrical golden kernels the size of horses' teeth. . . .

Now the harvest was shared out. Li Ying's family of seven owned two acres of land and three of its members worked. The previous year in the mutual-aid team they had harvested six *piculs* of grain; this year in the co-op they got forty-one. Li Ying jumped for joy and caught Wang by the arm. "Let's move those boundary stones away, chairman," he cried. "They use up a furrow or two of land, and get in our way as well."

"Don't let's tire ourselves out shifting those," chuckled Wang. "We'll only have to help you lug them back in a few days."

"Come off it, chairman! My mind's made up. I'm in the co-op for life. You couldn't get me to leave even if you kicked me out."

It had been a tough year, but already the paupers' co-op had shown the advantages of cooperation. After the harvest, sixty new families joined, bringing the total to eighty-three households. Hard work and thrifty management enabled the co-op to forge ahead every year, so that by 1956, three years later, Ch'ang-yu Village had changed out of all recognition. Every household entitled to had joined the co-op, and now they combined with three neighboring villages to form a cooperative of the more advanced type. By now their poor mountain valley had grown rich, the barren hills were smiling; flinty tracks had been transformed into smooth highways, thatched huts into tiled stone houses; and every single family had surplus grain and money in the bank. . . .

Things got better year by year in Ch'ang-yu Village. In 1958, several co-ops merged in the Kuang-ming People's Commune, with Wang as its chairman. Now it is 1962, just ten years after the co-op was set up. What earth-shaking changes these brief ten years have seen! In 1952, they started a co-op with a three-quarters' share in a donkey. Today they've gone a long way toward mechanizing agriculture. They have tractors to plough the fields, electric pumps, motors to hull rice, trucks to transport their produce.

Ten years ago there was more sand than soil on the stony hills, so that the crops were spoiled by flood or drought. In these ten years, they've built reservoirs and canals, changing the sandy hillsides into irrigated fields; they can water the crops in time of drought, and pump out excess water in time of flood. In place of six hundredweight an acre, they now raise one and a half tons or so, and the once barren hills are covered with fruit trees. So Ch'ang-yu Village today has rich mountains, rich water, rich soil, and rich people, too.

Six families out of ten have built new houses. . . .

If you stand on a hill in the evening and look down, the electric lights are like pearls gleaming in the dark, and Ch'ang-yu Village is a beautiful sight!

Changes in the Rural Economy

Editor's Introduction: Near the end of *The Pauper's Co-op* the merging of small cooperatives into larger communes is described. The communes, which range in size from about 10,000 people to 75,000 people, are large enough to mobilize labor for big projects such as land reclamation, water conservation, irrigation, road construction and so on, and to accumulate capital for schools, medical clinics and small factories.

The Communes are divided into "brigades" and "work teams" averaging about 2,000 and 200 people respectively. In most communes, the work teams are the "basic accounting unit," that is, team members are collectively responsible for investment in production and for distribution of income when crops are harvested. The land is owned collectively by the people who live on it, and not by individuals or the state, though there are a few state farms.

Most families own their own homes, and each household has a private plot on which it can raise food and animals for its own use or for sale at market. A farm worker's income depends on how much his team produces, how much effort he has put into that production (measured in work points), and how much he raises on his private plot. A family might also receive some money on the basis of need. Some teams are wealthier than others because they have better land or because they farm more effectively.

When a team harvests its crop, it distributes some of it among the team members and sells the rest to the state for distribution. Some of the money derived from sales to the state goes to various levels of the collective for such things as schools, hospitals,

He Jianzhang, "Present Economic Policies, What and Why?", *China Reconstructs*, January 1981, pp. 4-6.

administration and investment in new production (seeds, tools, irrigation pumps, etc.), and some is divided among individuals.

Collectivization has been effective for distributing wealth much more evenly than before, and that is no small accomplishment. But there is considerable dispute in China and by analysts outside China about whether collective farming is the most effective method of production. They point to small family farms in Japan, for instance, which produce more food per unit of land than do collective farms in China. But Japanese agriculture depends on heavy inputs of fertilizer, insecticides and irrigation which require a lot of money. The Chinese do not have the money to spend, but they do have a lot of people, and they can work more effectively together than individually, it is argued. The Chinese have decided to stick with their "socialist path" but one with several twists and turns.

The following article, written in 1981 by the deputy director of the Institute of Economics in the State Planning Commission of China, criticizes some of the agricultural decisions made during the Cultural Revolution. What problems does the author see in Chinese agriculture? What solutions does he offer? How does the life of a Chinese farmer differ from that of an American farmer?

ABOUT 80 PERCENT of China's population is rural. Agriculture provides practically all of her foodstuffs and 70 percent of the raw materials for her light industry. Farm and livestock products make up a quarter of her exports. So what happens in agriculture is important to the people's life, and to political stability, industrial growth and foreign trade. In the readjustment now being made in the entire national economy, therefore, that of rural policies is primary.

Since the founding of the new China, her agricultural production has steadily increased, stimulated first by the land reform, then by the collectivization and technical transformation of agriculture. Grain output rose from 113.2 million tons in 1949 to 304.75 million tons in 1978. That of cotton increased from 445,000 tons to 2,167,000 tons in the same period. But the productivity of agricultural labor is still low. Alongside some mechanization and semi-mechanization, most farm work is still manual. This fairly undeveloped and uneven situation requires a policy which allows various economic forms and ways of management to exist and grow in the countryside—

always provided socialist public ownership holds the dominant place.

The Problems

From long before the "cultural revolution," however, China's policies on agriculture were divorced from the real level of development of her productive forces. The idea was: the bigger the collective unit and the higher the level of public ownership, the better. So too much stress was placed on the transition from smaller to larger-scale collective ownership; some places even rushed on to public (state) ownership before the conditions were ripe. Calls were issued to restrict and even eliminate the individual economy. In farm management, the principle of adapting to local conditions was overlooked; instead all rural communes and brigades were urged to learn from a single model. Result: China's rural economy lost diversity and vitality.

Spreading "night soil" as fertilizer in Yangtze valley.(Photo by Richard Bartlett)

During the "cultural revolution" things got worse under the pernicious influence of the gang of four. The label "capitalist" was applied to most of the diversified activities of the people's communes (which include farming, forestry, animal husbandry, fish-breeding, etc.). In particular it was slapped on the sideline occupations of peasant households, on their small plots for personal use and on trade at village fairs—which were restricted or banned. Also violated were sound systems of labor management, and the principle of "to each according to his work." On the pretext of repudiating material incentives, the gang asserted that all should be treated alike, the diligent and the idle, the skilled and the unskilled. They were against work quotas, appraisal of work and allotment of work points. Thus they blocked the initiative of the collective economic units and of the peasants as individuals. As a result the development of agriculture was slowed down.

The Remedies

To remedy this situation, policies for readjustment have been adopted as follows:

First, the size of the production teams is to vary as local conditions require. Besides the state farms, there are now 90,000 people's communes in China's countryside. These are managed on three different levels: commune, production brigade and production team. The production team is, as a rule, the basic accounting unit. Teams which are too big (i.e. consist of more than 20-30 families), or those whose members are widely spread so that these teams lag in production because of difficulties in organizing work can be split up into smaller ones. In communes where the basic accounting unit has been prematurely raised to the brigade level (as often happened under the influence of the ultra-Leftist line) it is necessary to change it back to the team—if production hasn't benefited and members feel dissatisfied.

Secondly, more flexible and diverse forms of management and of responsibility for production are required within the teams in accord with their conditions (level of production, standard of living, crop characteristics of different localities). Collective production is to be geared more closely to the

A procession of carts and animals along a rural road in Northern China. (Photo by Peter Seybolt)

personal benefit of commune members. In some cases, year-round small work groups, responsible for particular jobs and with pay according to output, can be formed under the teams. Temporary or seasonal groups with limited responsibility can also be organized. Groups, or households, can specialize in occupations requiring more technique such as poultry-raising, gardening or fish-breeding. In some poor teams, where the population is scattered and production low, responsibility for work can be brought down to the households.

Thirdly, plots, livestock, trees and mountain slopes for private use that have been curtailed or abolished are to be restored and household sideline production and trade at local fairs developed.

Fourthly, production teams will no longer be restricted from processing farm and sideline products and doing trade.

Teams are encouraged to progress toward an integration of farming, handicrafts and commerce.

Fifthly, in the collective sector, the rights of management and decision-making of rural communes and production teams will be respected. The state will issue no more orders on their cultivation plans. It will only put forward quotas for a few major products (including grain, cotton and oilseeds) that communes, brigades and teams should sell to the state. And the state purchases will themselves gradually shift from a mandatory quota basis to a contract basis. Teams are to decide for themselves what crops they will grow, what land they will use for them, methods of cultivation, disposition of their surplus products and distribution of income. There will be no administrative intervention in such affairs by any level of government.

Sixth, the purchase prices of farm products will be raised substantially. Last year, the state added appropriations of over 10 billion yuan* for this purpose. In the future, on the basis of more production and greater revenues, the state will allot more funds each year to further raise the prices paid to products of farm and sideline and for adjusting the price ratios between industrial and agricultural products, and between different farm products.

Some Results

These new policies have won a warm and universal welcome from China's peasants, bringing new vitality to the rural economy. Agricultural growth, slow in the past, is accelerating. Increases in grain production in 1978 and 1979 exceeded 49 million tons: the biggest increase for any two consecutive years since the founding of the People's Republic. Production of oilseeds, meat and industrial crops has risen. The peasants' income from the collective economy grew considerably in 1979, to a national average of 83.4 yuan per capita. This, plus income from family sidelines, has improved their livelihood.

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* One yuan equals $1.50.

The Iron Man of Taching

Editor's Introduction: Industrial development in China, like agricultural development, has relied heavily on labor power. Economists characterize much of China's production as "labor intensive" rather than "capital intensive." In a labor intensive economy humans do much of the work done by machines in a capital intensive economy such as that of the United States. In China, workers have been exhorted to be self-reliant and self-sufficient, to work hard and overcome all problems through their own efforts. Workers who best exemplify those traits are rewarded and held up as models to inspire others. One such model is "Iron Man Wang," a worker at the Taching oil fields.

The following story was written during the Cultural Revolution. Note the constant comparison between industrial production and making war. What virtues should a good worker and a good soldier have in common according to the author?

On April 14, 1960, as dawn flushed the rolling grassland, the sun rose slowly over the horizon, red as a ball of flame. The well site was a hive of activity. Wang Chin-hsi, his stained, tattered sheepskin jacket over his shoulders, jumped onto the drilling platform for a final inspection of the preparations. Then he grasped the brake handle in his powerful hands and shouted at the top of his lungs: "Start drilling!" To him, this

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"The Story of the Iron Man," *Chinese Literature,* No. 7, 1972, pp. 62–71; abridged.

was not a simple drilling operation but a declaration of war against imperialism, revisionism, and the whole old world.

There followed five days and nights of strenuous work. Then glistening jet-black crude oil—the first Taching oil—came gushing out of the well! The huge oilfield, sealed for thousands of years, began yielding up its treasures. Wang Chin-hsi and his team gathered round, beside themselves with joy at the sight of that spurting column. "Long live Chairman Mao!" they cheered. "Long live Chairman Mao!"

It was not all plain sailing from then on, however. Soon after this first well was drilled an accident happened.

At dawn on May Day, under Wang Chin-hsi's supervision, they started dismantling the derrick to "move house." Both arms raised, his eyes on the drill, Wang moved back step by step, shouting directions.

Then, without warning, a drill pipe hurtled down. The team leader, struck on the legs, was knocked unconscious.

When Wang Chin-hsi came to, he saw that the derrick was not yet dismantled but that the political instructor and his comrades had stopped work to gather round and revive him.

"I'm not a clay figure, so easily smashed," Wang protested. With a great effort, he stood up. As he did so, blood soaked through his trouser legs, staining his shoes and socks.

The political instructor tore a strip from his own overalls to bandage the team leader's wound. With amazing tenacity, Wang, both arms raised high, went on directing the work.

Wang's legs became so badly swollen that his mates insisted he go to the hospital. But he would not hear of this. "Norman Bethune came all the way to China to help our revolution, and gave his life here. What's a leg wound?" he said. He told them on no account to spread word of his injury or report it to those in charge.

Wang's comrades, unable to persuade him to leave his fighting post or rest, made him pair of crutches. But whenever any of the leading comrades arrived he would hide these crutches in a pile of pipes and stand up unaided to report on the work and ask for new assignments.

Before long, however, those in charge learned what had happened and packed Wang off to the hospital.

Even when lying in bed in the hospital, Wang's heart was in the oilfield. In his mind's eye he saw his mates, strong and active as tigers. This was no time for him to be lying there, while the others battled for oil.

The next day another patient was brought in by truck. Wang seized his chance, when no nurses were about, to limp out on his crutches and clamber onto the truck, which took him back to his post.

To build the oilfield fast and well, Wang Chin-hsi and his comrades battled round the clock. But his legs grew more swollen from day to day, until finally the leadership, backed by his teammates, sent him to a hospital farther away from Taching. They urged the medical staff there to keep a strict eye on him, and he was put in the charge of a young doctor.

To be unable to work is the greatest hardship for a man of Wang's calibre. One hand on his bedside table, the other on a crutch, he propped himself up. Beads of sweat stood out on his forehead.

"My mates are going all out to build the oilfield," he informed the doctor. "How can I lie here idle?"

"You're in no condition to work," rejoined the other. "We're responsible for getting you back into shape."

"It's a serious matter, our country's lack of oil. This scratch on my leg is nothing. Can a few bumps and bruises stop making revolution?" Wang rose painfully to his feet.

"The leadership has entrusted you to my care. This is my fighting post, my job."

"My fighting post is at the oilfield, doctor." Gazing at the young doctor, Wang spoke with feeling. "My job is drilling oil wells for our country. Won't you help me get back to my post, where my duty lies?"

The young doctor, stirred by Wang's revolutionary spirit, went off to consult his leadership. Too impatient to wait for his return, Wang slapped on his cap and stumped out of the ward on his crutches, taking the next train back to the scene of battle. It was dark and pouring with rain when he reached Taehing. Too dark to distinguish mud, water, earth, or sky, he slithered along as best he could through the night.

At 1 AM, knocking on the door woke the men of Team 1205. When they lit a lamp and opened the door, they discovered this runaway patient from the hospital, leaning on a crutch. His injured leg was in a plaster cast. He was soaked to the skin and all over mud from his head to his bandaged feet. They hurriedly made up his bed. But by the time they looked round to urge him to rest, Wang had slipped out again behind their backs and limped on his crutches to the oil well.

Some time later, Wang Chin-hsi and his men were seated on some pipes discussing their work when—Wham! The heavy cement lid weighing several dozen pounds was blasted off the top of the drilling machine. A blowout was imminent.

A blowout is the most serious accident that can happen in an oilfield. When the mud specific gravity is too low, the oil and gas in a well burst through the earth to erupt like a volcano, striking sparks from the hurtling stones. The whole oilfield may turn into a sea of flame. A huge towering derrick may sink into the well. Wang held a hasty council of war with his mates and reported what had happened to headquarters.

The usual way of preventing a blowout is to increase the mud specific gravity with heavy spar. But in this newly opened oilfield, where the wells were still few and far between, heavy spar . . . would have to be fetched from far away. It would come too late to avert an accident. With great presence of mind, Wang came to a swift decision: They would pour cement into the mud tank.

This method had never been used before. It meant risking getting the drill stuck in the well. But Wang knew from previous investigations that the water here was too alkaline for the cement to harden immediately. If they took steps quickly to avert a blowout, there would still be time to deal with the cement.

"Pour in cement!" he ordered.

The whole team went into action. It was a tense battle.

Sack after sack of cement and loads of earth were poured into the sump.

A mixer was needed to mix the cement with the mud, but they had none at hand. Wang tried stirring the cement with a crutch, but this proved ineffective. Throwing away his crutches then, he jumped into the waist-deep mud.

Completely oblivious to his own pain, Wang trampled and stirred the mixture with hands and feet, moving swiftly and vigorously. The cement kept sinking to the bottom of the tank. As he stooped to stir it, mud bespattered his face. But simply tossing his head, he went on mixing.

Some young fellows quickly followed his example.

After a battle lasting over three hours they got the blowout under control, saving the oil well and the drilling machine.

Iron Man Wang Chin-hsi (on the right) with fellow workers. (From Jen-min hua-pao, 1971, No. 9.)

By that time, the highly alkaline mud had raised great blisters on their hands. And when his mates helped Wang out of the tank, his legs were so painful that he could no longer stand. Drops of sweat coursed down his face. Nonetheless, he squared his shoulders, reached for his crutches, and struggled to his feet.

"Never mind about me," he ordered. "Go on drilling."

Shortly before this, Aunt Chao had arrived from Ma-chia-yao with a basket of hard-boiled eggs. Tears in her eyes, she gazed at the drill-team leader. His sunken eyes were bloodshot. His prominent cheekbones stood out more sharply than ever. His short beard was caked with mud. Yet he stood his ground on the high drilling platform like some intrepid warrior, his muddy figure transformed by the golden sunlight into a splendid statute of glinting bronze. . . .

In all her sixty-odd years, Aunt Chao had never set eyes on such a sight. With lips that trembled she declared: "Team Leader Wang, you're a real man of iron!"

That is how the name "Iron Man" spread through Taching.

Editor's Postscript:

By publicizing the deeds of model workers, such as Iron Man Wang, the Government of China hoped to encourage people to work hard and produce more. Reward would come in the form of praise, publicity, and an increase in collective well-being.

In a capitalist economy encouragement for hard work and increased production usually takes a more material form — for example, increased wages, profits or bonuses. Such material rewards were denounced in China during the cultural revolution as symptomatic of a capitalist mentality. People were encouraged to work selflessly for the good of all, and not for immediate personal gain.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution that policy, like so many others, has been changed. Model workers such as Wang are still publicized, but individual material rewards have become the principal means to encourage workers. Exhortation and collective rewards are now considered too abstract to elicit the desired response from workers.

Likewise, there have been other changes in economic practice since the Cultural Revolution. Use of the market system to help regulate production and prices is an important case in point.

In a capitalist economy most decisions about what is to be produced, and what the price of a product will be, are determined by the market, that is, by consumer choice. Prices vary according to supply and demand.

In a socialist economy some production and price decisions are determined by the market, but many are made by the government. The government might decide, for instance, that the limited resources of a nation should be invested in increasing food production or in housing for the poor. In a market economy, those resources might be invested in the production of luxury apartments or expensive automobiles for the rich because there is a demand for those products by those who have money.

In many third world countries, that is exactly what happens. Production is heavily weighted toward production for the rich or production of goods for sale abroad. In either case, poor people, who are the majority of the population in most third world countries, remain poor. In some market economies, the government intervenes in the market to compensate for inequities by providing services such as social security, unemployment insurance, safety standards, minimum wage platforms, and so on.

Socialism in China is designed to reduce the disparity between rich and poor. There are few private automobiles, and there is little production of luxury goods. But food, medicine and housing, the basic necessities, are all kept rather inexpensive by price controls and by political decisions (rather than market decisions).

If a problem with the market system is that it tends to perpetuate inequalities, there are also problems with the socialist system. Decision making tends to become over-centralized, reducing the freedom of choice and creativity of numerous producers. (Such can also happen when a market system is dominated by monopolies or huge conglomerates). It is also extremely difficult for the planners to have sufficient data and sufficient wisdom to plan intelligently for the whole society.

In a market economy each enterprise plans only for itself. Mistakes in a planned, socialist economy tend to have a far wider impact on the whole economy.

Despite these problems, there is little evidence that China will not maintain a basic socialist orientation, but current indications are that increasingly it will try to modify its negative effects by introducing "capitalist" practices, such as decentralizing decision making, letting individual enterprises keep and reinvest their profits instead of turning them over to the government, and letting the market play a bigger role in setting prices and determining what goods will be produced.

The World's Largest Population

☙ *Editor's Introduction:* China has the world's largest population, estimated at one billion people in 1981. Almost one of every four people in the world is Chinese. That staggering fact affects almost every decision made in China. Plans for agriculture, industry, education, health, housing and employment are all influenced by population size and population estimates for the future.

In the past several years, China has made a special effort to slow down its population growth rate, and to a great extent it has succeeded. Today China's population is growing at the rate of 1.2 percent a year, one of the lowest growth rates in the developing world and down from 2.0 percent only 10 years ago. (The 1981 U.S. growth rate was 0.7 percent).

However, 1.2 percent of one billion is 12 million, a huge number of people to add to the population each year. The Chinese government has officially committed itself to lowering the growth rate to 1 percent by the end of the century; some official statements have set 1985 as the target year. Family-planning clinics, offering a variety of contraceptives, including abortions, have spread throughout the countryside in recent years, and the government has used every publicity technique at its disposal to encourage couples to marry at a later age, thereby reducing the number of their childbearing years. Already, China's efforts are being studied by other nations as examples of what can be done to solve the world's population problem.

Large families were much desired in traditional China. Because many children died before reaching maturity, many were wanted. Sons were needed to work on the land, to provide old-age security

Huang Yu-chuan, "Birth Control Education Campaigns," in *Population and Family Planning in the People's Republic of China*, The Victor-Bostrom Fund and The Population Crisis Committee, Washington, 1971.

for their parents, to carry on ancestral rites, and to perpetuate the family name. Daughters were not considered so important as sons because they married into other families when they were of age, but even so, they could bring power and prestige to the family and clan through marriage. For economic, social, and religious reasons, then, Chinese parents felt it was their responsibility to have large families.

Conditions have changed radically in China, but some Chinese parents continue to follow the old pattern of having large families. How can this be changed? The following selection describes some of the current efforts of the Chinese government to transform the old patterns of marriage and childbearing.

According to this account, how has China attempted to lower its birth rate? How important has the Communist Party been in this process?

The Birth-Control Campaign

"EXTOL ONE, Praise Two, Criticize Three, and Dispose Four."

Slogans, posters, and mass educational theories like this have been a vital part of Chinese birth-control activity. No sooner is a birth-control campaign decided upon than propaganda work begins on a big scale. This was the case in 1956-57 during the first birth-control effort and again in 1962-66 . . .

The younger generation is the main target of Chinese birth-control propaganda. This makes good sense because all those entering their childbearing years after the mid-1960s were born under the present regime and are not as strongly bound by traditional practices. Many of the older generation still like the idea of having many sons and grandsons. They do not want their own sons and daughters to practice birth control.

Also, under the old moral code, Chinese men and women always kept an arm's distance from each other. It is still not easy to discuss sex and contraception openly. The young couples, though more easily influenced, still hesitate to speak publicly about contraceptives or to buy them in a shop. Some are afraid contraceptives will lead to illicit sexual relations and decline in public morality.

When the birth-control campaign was first started, many people felt shy when purchasing contraceptives at the drugstore, especially when the sales personnel were of the opposite sex, so they often left without buying them. For this reason, local drugstores have on duty both men and women to receive customers . . . .

Campaigns for late marriage are an important part of the program and, of course, are aimed at the young. Age of marriage used to be about fifteen or sixteen. In 1950, marriage laws raised the age of marriage to twenty for men and eighteen for women. In 1956 and 1957, there was discussion of raising the age still higher; in 1962, propaganda was stepped up. Students were not allowed to marry until they finished their studies; young people with government jobs might be dismissed from work [if they married]; peasants were discouraged by marriage registrars. Younger couples might not get rations for themselves or their newborn babies.

At the same time, to inspire the people, Chinese Communist publications recounted many stories of exemplary citizens who postponed marriage five or six times. One woman cadre, a local brigade leader, who put off her own marriage six times, was cited as a model to the girls in her brigade. Many pledged to emulate her and not marry until they reached twenty-five. Age twenty-five for women and thirty for men is now the recommended minimum . . . .

Exhibitions are a popular form of education, readily received by the masses and easily moved from place to place. Exhibitions held in cities are fine in quality while those for the villages are comparatively simple. Usually, someone is around to offer point-by-point, picture-by-picture explanations, bearing in mind the cultural level of the masses.

Many of the audience, particularly the rural folk, visit the exhibition with a sense of curiosity or a feeling of shyness. After their visit they acquire some knowledge about birth control. Particularly when thousands upon thousands of men and women, young and old, gather together to visit the exhibition and listen to the explanations, their misgivings of all kinds are more easily dispelled. This produces a tremendous effect in promoting birth control.

The most effective among all forms of propaganda is the individual approach. When the movement was widely unfolded throughout the nation, all the basic-level cadres or activists became the backbone of the propaganda. The health workers, personnel cadres, street representatives, and women representatives in the city organizations and enterprises, on the one hand, and the commune member cadres, Communist Youth League cadres, women representatives, and health workers in the rural areas, on the other, first carried out large-scale propaganda. They then approached individually those parents with many children who were experiencing living difficulties, those about to get married, and those mothers-in-law who would not let their daughters-in-law practice birth control. Because they work in the same unit, live together, and know one another well enough to talk without any reservation, such approaches, when repeatedly made, are difficult to resist.

A family outing in South China. (From China Reconstructs, *August, 1972.)*

The huge number of cadres sent down to the countryside in recent years has become a great force for propaganda on birth control . . . .

The propaganda carried out during the mid-1960s campaign often savored of coercion. For instance, there was the slogan, "Two children is just right, three is too many, and four is a mistake"; no ration ticket for clothing was issued to a third newborn baby; and too-early marriages would not be registered. These measures, conducted and led by certain localities, resulted in workers and employees with many children receiving fewer economic benefits. They also form a strong pressure to make people realize deeply that having too many children is not only a disadvantage to themselves but also an offense to the government. It will be subject to criticism and considered as committing "an error." Therefore, like it or not, practicing birth control has become a social trend for everyone. When this practice becomes a tradition, it is easy for one to rid himself of dissatisfaction and misgiving . . . .

Not only the masses motivated to accept the idea, but also the cadres doing the propaganda work have to practice birth control. The following serves to illustrate this point:

A man cadre working in one of the newspapers already was a father of three children. He and his wife both wanted sterilization. Said his wife, "Surgically, the tying of the vas deferens is much easier for men to undergo, but, entertaining the fear that they will be physically affected if the operation is not successful, they always let their wives undergo an operation." When her colleagues learned of this, they criticized her husband, saying, "A husband that does not go for an operation but asks his wife to have it is selfish and is affected by the thinking that men are more important than women." Her husband said, "You hit the nail on the head by criticizing me this way." He felt ashamed of himself, for his wife, being a Party member and also chief of a production brigade, labors well, keeps the house well, and performs a duty that is heavier than his own. So he decided right away to have the operation.

The above instance shows that, although the decision on birth control has to be made by the couple themselves, it is apparent that certain pressure is brought to bear. This kind of propaganda method, which combines pressure with commendation, is precisely what the Chinese Communists have all along stressed . . . .

⁂ *Editor's Postscript:* Since this article was written, stricter measures have been taken to control population growth. In many areas, especially in cities, a third child will be alloted no ration card for food or clothing and the family will have to pay for its education. The family will also be given very low priority for new housing, even though its housing needs are greater. ⁂

The Environment: Two Views

§ *Editor's Introduction:* **As China's population and its economy grow, environmental questions become increasingly important. Until recently the Chinese have been optimistic about this issue. Speaking at the United Nations in 1973, a Chinese delegate said:**

> [We] would . . . like to deal briefly with the relationship between population growth and protection of the human environment. We hold that of all things in the world, people are the most precious. The masses have boundless creative power. To develop social production and create social wealth depends on people, and to improve the human environment also depends on people. The history of mankind has proved that the pace of development of production, science, and technology always surpasses the rate of population growth. The possibility of man's exploitation and utilization of natural resources is inexhaustible.
>
> Moreover, with the progress in science and technology, man's use of natural resources will increasingly grow in depth and scope. Mankind will create ever-greater quantities of wealth to meet the needs of its own subsistence and development. Mankind's ability to transform the environment will also grow continuously along with social progress and the advance of science and technology.*

The delegates' optimism is reflected in an article written in the Peking Review in 1973, but it is seriously challenged by a Canadian professor writing in 1980. Can the two views be reconciled? §

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* "China Explains Her Views on the Population Question," *Peking Review*, April 27, 1973, p. 17; abridged.

"Industrial Development and Pollution Control," *China Reconstructs*, February, 1973, pp. 2-5; abridged.

A Chinese View

CHINA IS NOW working in a planned way to prevent and eliminate industrial pollution of the environment by what we call the "three wastes"—waste gases, liquids, and residues. A good beginning has been made on this in the past few years.

REDISTRIBUTION OF INDUSTRY

We are pursuing a policy of building more industrial towns elsewhere in order to avoid overconcentration of industry and population in the older big cities. This means less industrial waste and garbage to be disposed of in any one place. It also facilitates the policy of combining industry and agriculture, city and country.

NEW-TYPE OIL TOWNS

The Taching oilfield provides an example. In its early days an argument arose about what kind of residential community it should have . . . .

A proposal to build a big city was discarded. Instead, more than a hundred smaller communities were set up scattered over a vast area between the extraction districts. The workers can be closer to their jobs and their families can be organized for work on the land nearby. The latter have now reclaimed about 10,000 hectares, on which are produced thousands of tons of grain and vegetables annually. Such communities of simple, conveniently located dwellings not only provide a more healthful environment for the workers to live in but also make for the combination of industry and agriculture, city and country.

TRANSFORMING OLD CITIES

Old industrial cities are gradually being transformed. Take Shanghai, for instance, where, before the liberation, imperialist capital built factories to plunder China's resources and exploit her cheap labor-power. Factories located in and among areas where the working people lived spewed forth their poisonous smoke, emptied out their poisonous residues, and dumped their refuse without restriction, creating a very unhealthful atmosphere. After liberation, the people's government began transforming China's largest city into a new socialist one.

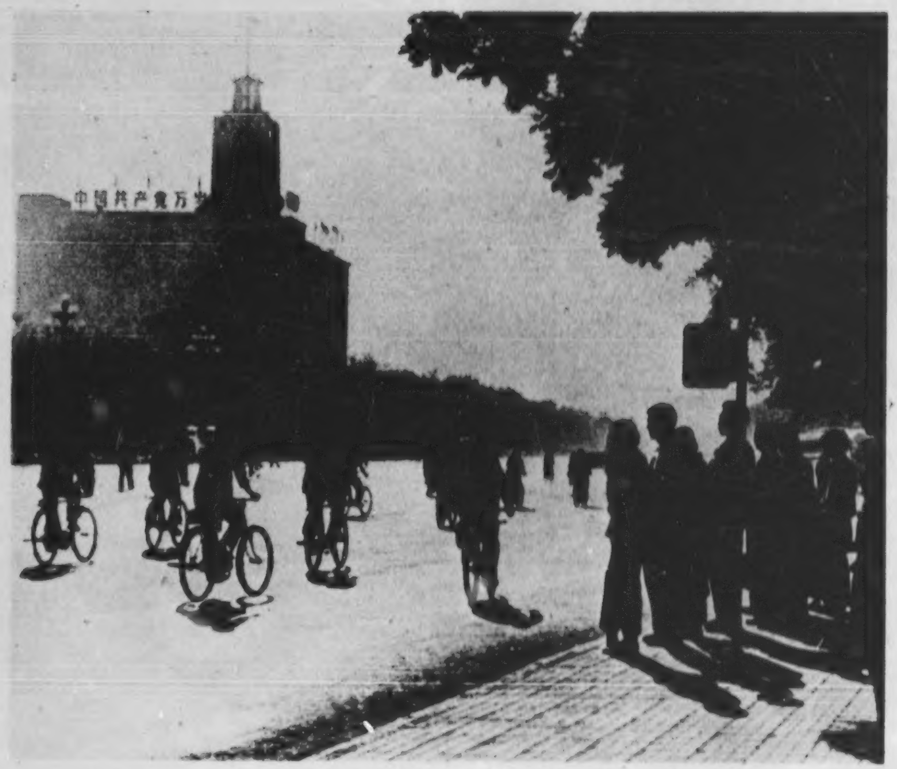
The first stage included covering the open sewage channels and building boulevards above them. Three hundred miserable slum areas were torn down and new "workers' village" housing projects constructed on the sites, providing new homes for over a million people.

A second measure was to adjust the distribution of industry. About 1,000 factories located near residential areas were considered particularly harmful. These were rather small factories using crude equipment and backward technological processes. During the First Five-Year Plan (1953-57) the government began moving most of these outside the city and renovating them to reduce pollution, improve working conditions, and facilitate production.

When new industrial plants are set up, they are constructed outside the city. New industrial districts for chemicals, electrical machinery, instruments and meters, metallurgy, and oil refining have been set up at distances up to twenty kilometers, from the city. A "buffer zone" between them and the city helps curtail pollution in the inner city.

UTILIZING WASTE

Full utilization of wastes—converting hazards into benefits—is another important measure. Some progress has been made in this respect. Tail gas from oil refineries used to be poured into the air. Now from this gas many petrochemical units recover valuable chemicals used in making things like synthetic fibers and rubber, plastics and chemical fertilizers. Coal rocks and slag, which, when dumped, formerly covered huge areas of farmland, are now being used in the production of chemical raw materials, fertilizers, cement, bricks, and refractory materials. From the toxic tail gas from nonferrous-metals refining, large amounts of sulphuric acid are being recovered. Several hundred products are now being made out of wastes from chemical, insecticide, pharmaceutical, and



Going to work, Peking. (From New China News Agency, Peking.)

light industrial production.

The recovery and utilization of wastes is an integral part of national planning for basic construction. Projects for this purpose are required to go into operation at the same time that new factories and mines go into production. Industrial departments are working together with research units to improve production processes so as to reduce or eliminate pollution. Research is also being done on ways to counteract the harm caused by remaining health hazards and to find ways of treating diseases caused by them.

ALL FOR THE PEOPLE

In our country, what benefits the people and the country is given first consideration in everything that is done. Therefore some areas and enterprises allocate a certain portion of their funds for treatment of sewage and other wastes. This may yield them little or no profit, but from the point of view of the whole, of preventing pollution of the air, rivers and water sources, protecting aquatic life and supporting agriculture, this means great profit indeed. Therefore these departments do so readily . . . .

The Chinese people are keenly aware that only by building an independent national industry can the people's livelihood be continuously improved and the country made strong and prosperous. Growth of industry is bound to present greater environmental problems. Social progress and the advance of science and technology can help solve them. We believe, however, that the key to solving them is action by the masses—that is, bringing their initiative and wisdom into full play on the principle of "everything to benefit the people."

China has made some progress in eliminating pollution, but we still do not have much experience. And even when old problems of waste are solved, the use of new materials, technological processes, and techniques and the development of new products will create more problems. Ending environmental pollution is indeed a long-term project.

An Outside View

A very disquieting picture of China's environment has emerged as a result of the recent openness of the Peking leadership. China faces pollution and environmental degradation at least as serious as in any large modernizing nation and the current plans for fast, large scale industrialization in the coming decades cannot but worsen the situation.

The recent Chinese admissions are in sharp contrast to

Vaclav Smil, "The Four Modernizations: Smog, Oil Slicks, Noise, Waste," *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 20, 1980.

writings and broadcasts of just a few years ago when, in Maoist phrases, only the "monopoly capitalist groups which seek superprofits" were the ones discharging "at will and in disregard of the fate of the people harmful substances that pollute and poison the environment." Now the State Economic Commission and the Office for Environmental Protection of the State Council are expressing concern about serious environmental deterioration and are trying to check the tide of problems that have been accumulating for decades.

Smog

Air pollution is a ubiquitous and particularly troublesome problem in virtually all of China's large cities and industrial areas. The widespread burning of low-quality solid fuels is its principal source. China is extracting over 600 million tons of raw coal and uses nearly one-third of this output as household fuel, either as lump coal or coal-dust briquettes.

Combustion of these inferior fuels in small stoves is inefficient, and the pollutants are released without much dispersion very low above the ground, making for a most intractable air quality problem, especially in China's northern cities. High winter concentrations of soot and sulfur dioxide are responsible for large numbers of people suffering from chronic respiratory diseases. Industrial coal combustion is a no less serious contributor to China's air pollution. In Peking, where over 8 million tons of coal are consumed annually, 72% of the fuel burned in industrial enterprises is wasted and such low efficiency is typical across the country.

The most difficult problem in the future will be the gaseous pollution (sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides) that will spread over large areas as a result of the planned expansion of coal-fired electricity generation in huge modern power plants. Using bituminous coal and low quality high-sulfur lignite as fuel for power plants is a national strategy, and the Chinese are already committed to the construction of a series of giant coal-fired stations in several provinces.

Currently there are no reliable and inexpensive ways to control sulfur dioxide from such large plants. The resulting acid rain will have especially damaging effects on crop yields, in particular on vegetables grown in suburban areas, and it will have major destabilizing effects on aquaculture.

NOISE

Noise pollution in large Chinese cities is astounding: taxis in Peking and Shanghai are hooting their horns at a fairly constant rate, one beep per car every 1.2 seconds. The situation is not helped by the habit of turning off the engine at red traffic lights to save fuel. Ma Dayou, deputy director of the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Acoustics, says noise in Peking is worse than in Tokyo, a city with 15 times the number of vehicles and many more factories and transport terminals than China's capital. He adds that measurements in other large cities showed the average decibel level to be higher in Peking than in New York, London, Rome or Tokyo.

WATER POLLUTION

With the rapid expansion of the energy, chemical, and metallurgical industries and with the growth of cities, there is widespread water pollution. All major rivers have been seriously contaminated in the stretches in and downstream of cities that discharge large quantities of untreated industrial and urban waste. Even more alarmingly, contamination of Bo Hai, China's largest bay, is becoming serious and it will most likely deteriorate further once the large-scale expansion of petroleum production from the undersea extensions of Dagang and Shengli oilfields gets under way with the much more frequent oil tanker traffic.

China's marine life has been already damaged by indiscriminate fishing methods and by land reclamation along the coast. Catches of several fish species have fallen substantially and some popular kinds, such as yellow croaker, are becoming extinct.

Reclaiming of land along coasts traditionally used for seafood breeding or as natural feeding and spawning grounds has destroyed precious resources. A total of over 60,000 hectares* of such land was reclaimed between 1959 and 1978 and large losses of high quality sea protein cannot ever be made up by the meagre crop yields from the inappropriately reclaimed land.

Incomparably greater damage was done to freshwater fishing. Incomplete statistics indicate that since 1949, 8% of China's total inland water surface has been lost to indiscriminate land reclamation.

The fish catch from inland waters has fallen to only half that of 1954, making fresh fish a rare delicacy in a nation where aquatic protein used to be a close second to pork, and first in many places. Moreover production of valuable reeds, lotus roots, water chestnuts, and weeds has been lost, floodwater retention reduced, and local climate disturbed.

Disappearance of good farmland is a universal problem, but for China—a nation with less than 0.1 hectare of cultivated land per capita—it is an extremely perilous trend. In 1957 China's cultivated area was 111.8 million hectares, but during 1979 many Chinese sources kept referring to only 100 million hectares, implying that 12% of the country's farmland had been lost in just over two decades. The irrationality of Chinese land use is all too obvious: tens of millions of people are straining themselves every winter and spring to reclaim much of the inferior land in distant mountain regions, on hill slopes, in waterlogged, alkaline or saline areas while millions of hectares of prime farmland are disappearing.

Conversion of grasslands to cropland, practiced for two decades on a large scale, has had predictable consequences. Once the natural vegetation is destroyed the ecosystem balance is lost, yields of newly introduced crops swiftly fall, and the land is condemned to inexorable erosion and desertification.

Although an eighth of China is covered with forest, it is extremely unevenly distributed. More than half is either a secondary regrowth or young plantings. The Chinese have undertaken massive afforestation campaigns officially claim-ing up to 28 million hectares of newly afforested land since 1949.

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* One hectare equals 2.5 acres.

Naive foreigners have taken these claims at face value, not realizing that all too often they represent targets passed down from above whose fulfillment was, in due time, reported by lower-level bureaucrats no matter how the work was done, if at all. A revealing folk saying explains why some areas plant trees every year—and still have no forests: "Trees everywhere in spring, just half left by summer; no care taken in the fall, all trees gone by winter." The survival rate of new plantings has been appallingly low, often much below 10%, for several reasons: Careless planting, inadequate follow-up care and lack of a scientific approach to afforestation.

But many trees that survive are recklessly destroyed to obtain scarce fuel: branches are cut off, roots dug up and bark and leaves torn off. Illegal felling of mature trees in state forests, always strictly forbidden by both state and provincial regulations, has become so widespread lately that the State Council has had to issue a new law that not only imposes fines and planting of three new trees for every one destroyed but also demands a guarantee of the new saplings' survival.

Forests in many areas are in a poor state and are still being damaged; commercial logging increases while large areas of cutover forest have not yet been reforested; consequently, in the past few years forest resources have gradually diminished and a 1979 national symposium on forestry economics was told that "according to the estimate based on the actual rate of reduction, by the end of this century there will be no trees to harvest."

The costs involved in reversing environmental degradation will not be low. The Chinese have achieved no mean results in eliminating various wastes through simple and frugal recycling, but pollution from large, modern industries can be handled only by introducing the appropriate advanced technologies. Many of these are complex, expensive and energy-intensive and will increase China's modernization costs appreciably.

But the Chinese have hardly any other choice. Uncontrolled pollution would soon lead to drastic decreases of crop and livestock production, extinction of aquatic life and irreparable damage to forests. The Chinese also have to stop and reverse the conversion of grasslands, lakes, and coastal areas to crop fields, manage their forests much more carefully and proceed cautiously with chemization of their food chains.

How well it can balance the conflicting requirements of speedy industrialization and higher agricultural production with the necessity of a reasonably clean environment is one of the main dilemmas China faces along the road to development.

Barefoot Doctors

Editor's Introduction: Population and environmental issues are closely related to health considerations. In contrast to the dispute over environmental issues discussed in the last chapter, there is general agreement that medical care has made great progress.

In the years following the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, a number of measures were taken that greatly improved the general health of the populace. Techniques of mass organization and education, which had been used effectively to bring the Communists to power, were employed in nationwide campaigns to improve sanitation and hygiene, eliminate disease-bearing pests, and immunize the populace against contagious diseases.

As a result of these efforts, epidemics of smallpox, cholera, and plague that had flourished during the long years of war were quickly brought under control; cases of tuberculosis and schistosomiasis (a seriously debilitating disease caused by snails) fell sharply; drug addiction and venereal disease were virtually eliminated, at a time when they were spreading rapidly in other parts of the world.

The government subsidized the cost of medical care, reducing or eliminating direct costs to the patient. For employees of state-run enterprises, such as factories, mines, railroads, and government offices, and for students, medical care is free except for a small registration fee of about 3¢ (U.S. equivalent in 1973). Peasants are covered by cooperative medical plans to which they contribute 25¢ to 50¢ per year. Dependents and other nonworking people who are not covered by these plans pay a very small fee for health care. A chest x-ray costs about 8¢, a hospital bed costs 25¢ or less per day. The cost for delivering a child is about $1.25, an appendectomy costs $2.00, and the most difficult operations, such as heart or brain surgery, cost less than $8.00.

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* "'Barefoot Doctors'—Giving Medical Treatment While Taking Part in Farm Work," *Peking Review*, May 25, 1973, pp. 15-21; abridged.

The cost of medicines is also low and has been reduced continually since 1949. Most prescriptions today cost 1 ¢ or less.

By the mid-1960s, the health of the Chinese people had greatly improved, but a major unsolved problem, which became a central issue of dispute during the Cultural Revolution, was the uneven distribution of medical care. As in most countries, doctors and medical supplies were in greater abundance in the cities than in the countryside. In many rural areas, medical care was inadequate or nonexistent. As a result of the Cultural Revolution, much more attention has been given to rural areas, where most of the people live. Many doctors have been transferred to rural areas to live and work, but because there are too few fully trained M.D.'s to service the whole population, the emphasis has been on training tens of thousands of paramedical personnel, called "barefoot doctors."

The selections that follow describe the function of those barefoot doctors. How are they trained? How would a large corps of paramedical personnel affect the delivery of medical care in the United States?

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THE NAME "barefoot doctor" first appeared in the Chiang-chen People's Commune on Shanghai's outskirts.

In 1965, when Chairman Mao issued the call "In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas," a number of mobile medical teams formed by urban medical workers came to Chiang-chen. Though it was near the metropolis, this commune had only one health clinic with about a dozen medical personnel serving a population of 28,000. When the medical teams arrived, the local peasants were glad to see them. While curing and preventing commune members' diseases, the doctors from Shanghai helped the clinic give a group of young peasants some medical training.

Later, when the teams left, these peasants took their place and since then have gradually become full-fledged doctors. Taking medical kits with them, they worked barefooted alongside the peasants in the paddyfields, and they treated peasants in the fields, on the threshing grounds, or in their homes. They were at once commune members and doctors, doing farm work and treating patients. Like other commune members, they receive their pay on the basis of workpoints, and their income was more or less the same as that of able-bodied peasants doing the same amount of work. The peasants warmly welcomed them and affectionately called them "barefoot doctors.". . . .

Generally speaking, "barefoot doctors" are given three to six months of short-term training before starting to work. Training classes with few but well-selected courses are run by the commune's clinic, county hospital, and mobile medical teams from the cities or medical schools. . . . The aim is to give the trainees the ability to do practical work as quickly as possible and to lay the foundation for advanced study. . . .

In 1965, Wang Kuei-chen, who was twenty-one that year, was chosen to attend a training course for "barefoot doctors" run by the commune's clinic. . . .

During her four months of training, Wang Kuei-chen and twenty-seven other young men and women were taught to cure scores of common diseases and to prescribe some 100 medicines. . . . They learned the fundamentals of acupuncture treatment at thirty major points on the human body. This ABC of medical science was of great use to these young people, who have deep feelings for the peasants.

Back from the training course, Wang Kuei-chen continued doing farm work, such as transplanting rice-shoots, weeding, and harvesting together with the villagers. Wherever she worked, in the fields, at construction sites of water-conservancy projects, or other places, she always had her medical kit at hand. She and two other "barefoot doctors" took charge of handling all the diseases and injuries they could among the more than 1,500 brigade members. After giving prescriptions, she made it a rule to call on the patients and ask them about the effects of the medicine so as to sum up experience and improve her work. As to cases she could not handle, she always went with the patients to the city hospital. . . .

All this was not just for the purpose of learning, but, more important, her aim was to look after the patients still better. In summer, villagers sometimes were bitten by snakes. When she was told that a worker in a factory several kilometers away could treat snakebites with herbal medicine, she immediately went to see him. Combining what she learned from the worker with Western medicine, she has treated more than a dozen snakebite cases in the last two years.

Affectionately called their "close friend" by the villagers, Wang Kuei-chen was elected deputy secretary of the com-

An old doctor trains a barefoot doctor to recognize medicinal herbs. (From China Reconstructs, *November, 1972.)*

mune Party committee and a member of the county Party committee. Despite the change in her position, she is still a "barefoot doctor."

She has also made rapid progress in medical technique. She and other "barefoot doctors" took turns working in the commune's health clinic or getting further training in advanced courses. Last year, she spent two months studying anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry in a medical college and later went to the county hospital's internal medicine department for advanced study in combination with clinical treatment.

"Barefoot doctor" Chang Hsiang-hua in the countryside . . . in northwest China had only learned some elementary knowledge and technique of Western medicine in a training class. In the course of practice, he found that there were many effective prescriptions of traditional Chinese medicine used by the local people who lived in a hilly village where many medicinal herbs grew. If these traditional methods were put to good use, he thought, it would produce very good results in curing certain diseases and save the patients much expense. So he and his colleagues set about learning from veteran practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine and experienced herb-pickers in the locality. As a result, they were able to recognize 240 herbs and learned to give herbal prescriptions and cure diseases by acupuncture. They themselves picked the needed herbs and later planted them. Last year, they went a step further. . . . They processed herbs into easy-to-use pills, powders, and liquid medicines to stop bleeding and coughing, induce lactation, and cure burns.

In 1970, Chang Hsiang-hua had the opportunity to learn from a traditional Chinese doctor of a medical team that had come from Peking for six months. He worked together with this old doctor every day, diagnosing and curing patients. He also spent one to two hours listening to his talks on the theories of traditional Chinese medicine. Studying this way helped Chang quickly increase his ability.

For a period of time, he and other "barefoot doctors" in the brigade cooperated closely with medical teams from Peking, making an over-all investigation of an endemic disease. They learned to give every brigade member a cardiographic check-up and carried out auscultatory and oral investigations from house to house. They gave decoctions of herbal medicine twice a day to twenty-eight patients who had varying symptoms. Carefully observing the effects, they continued studying ways to improve the prescription's ingredients. After 150 days, all the patients were better. In this way, the young "barefoot doctors" learned how to diagnose, cure, treat and prevent this disease.

Study through practice, as shown by the above-mentioned examples, is the basic way "barefoot doctors" are trained. This quick and effective method makes up for the drawbacks owing to medical schools' being unable to train large numbers of doctors in a short time. In a developing country like China, the first step to change backwardness in medical work in the rural areas is, so to speak, "sending charcoal in snowy weather," not "adding flowers to the embroidery." "Barefoot doctors" are a newborn force that has bright prospects.

Every rural people's commune today has its "barefoot doctors" who are either children of the once-impoverished peasants and herdsmen or city-bred middle-school students who have settled in the countryside. These peasant-doctors are playing an important role in the rural areas where doctors and medicine are in great demand.

"Never the Twain Shall Meet"

Editor's Introduction: For many years after the establishment of the People's Republic, China's relations with the rest of the world were severely restricted. Practically its only friends were the Soviet Union and other Communist countries. The United States vowed both to contain and isolate China, viewing it as a pawn in the Soviet Union's alleged desire to dominate and transform the world. China's confrontation with United Nations forces in the Korean War, in the early 1950s, served to confirm suspicions of Chinese aggressiveness.

From the Chinese perspective, the Korean War, and the French military effort to regain control in Indo-China (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) on China's southern border confirmed its suspicion that Western imperialists were still trying to dominate Asia, as they had before World War II.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s when its relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated, China became even more isolated. Unwilling to accept satellite status under Soviet domination, like the Eastern European countries, China turned to a policy of self-reliance. Its commercial and political relations with other countries practically halted, especially during the Cultural Revolution when China recalled all but one of its ambassadors. Not until the early 1970s did China begin to reestablish foreign contacts.

China's isolation, then, was imposed both from the outside and from inside. To understand the situation in depth, one must look at history. Traditionally, the Chinese wanted very little to do with foreigners. They considered them barbarians from whom they had little to gain materially or culturally. Foreign diplomats were accepted by the Chinese emperor only if they acknowledged their inferiority and begged to be educated.

In the 19th century, Europeans and Americans wanted both diplomatic equality and trade, and were willing to fight to get them. Having defeated the Chinese in the Opium War in 1840, Westerners began to despise the Chinese for their weakness.

In the readings which follow, the arrogance of the traditional Chinese attitude toward foreigners, illustrated in the letter from the Ch'ien Lung Emperor to King George of England in 1793, is matched by the arrogance of Westerners once they had become dominant in China, illustrated in excerpts from speeches by U.S. Senator Albert Beveridge, President Theodore Roosevelt, and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany whose troops were about to lead a punitive expedition against the Chinese in 1900. These selections were all written in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

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Edict from the Ch'ien-Lung Emperor To King George III of England

[September 1793, on the Occasion of Lord Macartney's Mission to China]

You, O King, live beyond the confines of many seas, nevertheless, impelled by your humble desire to partake of the benefits of our civilization, you have dispatched a mission respectfully bearing your memorial. Your Envoy has crossed the seas and paid his respects at my Court on the anniversary of my birthday. To show your devotion, you have also sent offerings of your country's produce.

I have perused your memorial: the earnest terms in which it is couched reveal a respectful humility on your part, which is highly praiseworthy. In consideration of the fact that your Ambassador and his deputy have come a long way with your memorial and tribute, I have shown them high favour and have allowed them to be introduced into my presence. To manifest my indulgence, I have entertained them at a banquet and made them numerous gifts. I have also caused presents to be forwarded to the Naval Commander and six hundred of his officers and men, although they did not come to Peking, so that they too may share in my all-embracing kindness.

As to your entreaty to send one of your nationals to be accredited to my Celestial Court and to be in control of your

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Dun J. Ki, *Modern China, From Mandarin to Commisar,* Charles Scribner and Sons, New York, 1978, pp. 41-45.

country's trade with China, this request is contrary to all usage of my dynasty and cannot possibly be entertained. It is true that Europeans, in the service of the dynasty, have been permitted to live at Peking, but they are compelled to adopt Chinese dress, they are strictly confined to their own precincts and are never permitted to return home. You are presumably familiar with our dynastic regulations. Your proposed Envoy to my Court could not be placed in a position similar to that of European officials in Peking who are forbidden to leave China, nor could he, on the other hand, be allowed liberty of movement and the privilege of corresponding with his own country; so that you would gain nothing by his residence in our midst.

Moreover, Our Celestial dynasty possesses vast territories, and tribute missions from the dependencies are provided for by the Department for Tributary States, which ministers to their wants and exercises strict control over their movements. It would be quite impossible to leave them to their own devices. Supposing that your Envoy should come to our Court, his language and national dress differ from that of our people, and there would be no place in which he might reside. It may be suggested that he might imitate the Europeans permanently resident in Peking and adopt the dress and customs of China, but, it has never been our dynasty's wish to force people to do things unseemly and inconvenient. Besides, supposing I sent an Ambassador to reside in your country, how could you possibly make for him the requisite arrangements? Europe consists of many other nations besides your own: if each and all demanded to be represented at our Court, how could we possibly consent? The thing is utterly impracticable. How can our dynasty alter its whole procedure and regulations, established for more than a century, in order to meet your individual views? If it be said that your object is to exercise control over your country's trade, your nationals have had full liberty to trade at Canton for many a year, and have received the greatest consideration at our hands. Missions have been sent by Portugal and Italy, preferring similar requests. The Throne appreciated their

A women's militia artillery unit. (*From* Jen-min hua-pao, *Nos. 7–8, 1971, p. 15.*)

sincerity and loaded them with favours, besides authorising measures to facilitate their trade with China. You are no doubt aware that, when my Canton merchant, Wu Chao-p'ing, was in debt to the foreign ships, I made the Viceroy advance the monies due, out of the provincial treasury, and ordered him to punish the culprit severely. Why then should foreign nations advance this utterly unreasonable request to be represented at my Court? Peking is nearly 10,000 *li* from Canton, and at such a distance what possible control could any British representative exercise?

If you assert that your reverence for Our Celestial dynasty fills you with a desire to acquire our civilisation, our ceremonies and code of laws differ so completely from your own that, even if your Envoy were able to acquire the rudiments of our civilisation, you could not possibly transplant our manners and customs to your alien soil. Therefore, however adept the Envoy might become, nothing would be gained thereby.

Swaying the wide world, I have but one aim in view, namely, to maintain a perfect governance and to fulfil the duties of the State; strange and costly objects do not interest me. If I have commanded that the tribute offerings sent by you, O King, are to be accepted, this was solely in consideration for the spirit which prompted you to dispatch them from afar. Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures. This then is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage, which would only result in inconvenience to yourself. I have expounded my wishes in detail and have commanded your tribute Envoys to leave in peace on their homeward journey. It behoves you, O King, to respect my sentiments and to display even greater devotion and loyalty in the future, so that, by perpetual submission to our Throne, you may secure peace and prosperity for your country hereafter. Besides making gifts (of which I enclose a list) to each member of your Mission, I confer upon you, O King, valuable presents in excess of the number usually bestowed on such occasions, including silks and curios—a list of which is likewise enclosed. Do you reverently receive them and take note of my tender goodwill towards you! A special mandate.

Albert Beveridge (1898)

" . . . He (Grant) never forgot that we are a conquering race and that we must obey our blood and occupy new markets, and if necessary, new lands. He beheld as a part of the Almighty's infinite plan, the disappearance of debased civilizations and decaying races before the higher civilization of the nobler and more virile types of man.

"Fate puts the American people upon their decision between a Chinese policy of isolation, poverty, and decay, or an American policy of progress, prosperity, and power.

"And in freeing Peoples, perishing and oppressed, our country's blessing will also come; for profits follow righteousness."

Theodore Roosevelt (1900)

" . . . We cannot, if we would, play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders, taking no interest in what goes beyond them; sunk in a scrambling commercialism; heedless of the *higher* life, the life of aspiration, of toil and risk; busying ourselves only with the wants of our bodies for the day; until suddenly we should find, beyond a shadow of question, what China has already found, that in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound in the end to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities."

Kaiser Wilhelm II (1900)

" . . . By nature the Chinaman is a cowardly cur, but he is tricky and double-faced. Small detached troops must be particularly cautious. The Chinaman likes to fall upon an enemy from an ambush, or during night time, or with vast superiority in numbers. Recently the enemy has fought bravely, a fact which has not yet been sufficiently explained. Perhaps these were his best troops, drilled by German and other officers.

"The Chinese have disregarded the law of nations. They have shown scorn for the sacredness of an envoy, for the duties of hospitality, in a manner unparalleled in the history. And this the more reprehensible because these crimes have been committed by a nation which boasts of its ancient culture . . . . You are to fight against a cunning, courageous, well-armed, and cruel foe. When you are upon him, know this: spare nobody, make no prisoners. See your weapons in a manner to make every Chinaman for a thousand years to come forego the wish to as much as look askance at a German . . . ."

China and the United States

An American View of China in 1966

Editor's Introduction: In 1972, President Nixon visited China, and for the first time since 1949 the hostility that had marked relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China began to abate. The American people began to take a closer look at China and to see some admirable things. The Chinese press became less abusive in its remarks about the United States and even declared that there were things that the Chinese could learn from America.

The differences between the two countries are by no means resolved. They will continue to influence international relations for the indefinite future. But for the first time in more than two decades, the two nations are willing to discuss their differences openly, face to face.

The reasons for hostility between the United States and the People's Republic are very complex, but we can get some insight into them by reading statements that both sides have made. In the selection that follows, written in 1966, the American Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs gives his view of Chinese intentions in foreign affairs. Why does he think China is to be feared?

THERE IS TODAY in Communist China a government whose leadership is dedicated to the promotion of Communism by violent revolution.

William P. Bundy, "The United States and Communist China," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966; abridged.

The present leaders in Peking also seek to restore China to its past position of grandeur and influence. Many of Peking's leaders today, now grown old, are proud and arrogant, convinced that they have been responsible for a resurgence of Chinese power. The China of old exercised a degree of control over Asia that waxed and waned according to the power of the ruling emperor. Under strong rulers this meant a type of overlordship, sometimes benign but frequently otherwise, over the countries around its borders. And the restoration of that image and controlling influence is certainly a part of Communist China's foreign policy today.

In the 1930's, Mao Tse-tung called attention to areas controlled by China under the Manchu Empire but since removed from Chinese control: Korea, Taiwan, the Ryukyus, the Pescadores, Burma, Bhutan, Nepal, Annam, and Outer Mongolia. In more recent years, Chinese Communist leaders have added to that list parts of Soviet Central Asia and eastern Siberia. I think we can take this as valid evidence of Peking's Asian ambitions. . . .

In addition to these historically rooted aspirations, the present leadership is inspired by a Communist ideology still in a highly militant and aggressive phase. . . .

This Communist element includes the advocacy of change through revolution and violence throughout the world and particularly in China's neighboring areas—not revolution seeking the fruition of the national goals of the people of these areas, but revolution supplied or stimulated from outside and based on a preconceived pattern of historical development.

Their vision of this Communist mission extends to countries far from China—including, as we all clearly have seen, Africa and even Latin America. Peking's plans for carrying out its objectives have been delineated in a series of pronouncements issued by its leaders, one of the latest and most widely publicized having been that issued last September by Marshal Lin Piao, top military leader in Communist China, in which Lin Piao offered Chinese Communist experience in the war against Japan as a lesson to be emulated by the less developed countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in their pursuit of "revolution.". . .

[The] spread of Chinese domination would inevitably create its own dynamic and in the end threaten even the most securely based and largest nations within the area of that threat, such as India and Japan. One does not need to subscribe to any pat "domino" formula to know from the history of the last generation, and indeed from all history, that the spread of domination feeds on itself, kindling its own fires within the dominant country and progressively weakening the will and capability of others to resist. . . .

A Chinese View of the United States in 1965

Editor's Introduction: The statement by William Bundy refers to the threat the Chinese pose to world peace and especially to Asia. The Chinese were quick to point out that, at the time that statement was made, not one single Chinese military unit was stationed outside China, but that the United States, by contrast, had surrounded China with military bases in Japan, Okinawa, Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand, and had several thousand fighting troops just over the Chinese border in Vietnam. For Americans, a comparable situation would exist if the Chinese had had major bases in Canada, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Nantucket Island, and were fighting a major war against America's allies in Mexico. The Chinese said a look at a map showing where foreign troops are stationed around the world would make it clear who is the aggressor and the threat to world peace.

William Bundy's statement refers to an article by Lin Piao. Part of that article is reproduced below. It puts the aggressor's shoe on the other foot.

In what respects does Lin Piao differ with Secretary Bundy?

SINCE WORLD WAR II, U.S. imperialism has stepped into the shoes of German, Japanese, and Italian fascism and has been trying to build a great American empire by dominating and enslaving the whole world. It is actively fostering Japanese

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Lin Piao, *Long Live the Victory of People's War!* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1966), pp. 53–58; abridged.

and West German militarism as its chief accomplices in unleashing a world war. Like a vicious wolf, it is bullying and enslaving various peoples, plundering their wealth, encroaching upon their countries' sovereignty and interfering in their internal affairs. It is the most rabid aggressor in human history and the most ferocious common enemy of the people of the world. Every people or country in the world that wants revolution, independence, and peace cannot but direct the spearhead of its struggle against U.S. imperialism.

Just as the Japanese imperialists' policy of subjugating China made it possible for the Chinese people to form the broadest possible united front against them, so the U.S. imperialists' policy of seeking world domination makes it possible for the people throughout the world to unite all the forces that can be united and form the broadest possible united front for a converging attack on U.S. imperialism. . . .

Since World War II, people's war has increasingly demonstrated its power in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The peoples of China, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Indonesia, Algeria, and other countries have waged people's wars against the imperialists and their lackeys and won great victories. The classes leading these people's wars may vary, and so may the breadth and depth of mass mobilization and the extent of victory, but the victories in these people's wars have very much weakened and pinned down the forces of imperialism, upset the U.S. imperialist plan to launch a world war, and become mighty factors defending world peace.

Today, the conditions are more favorable than ever before for waging of people's wars by the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. . . .

When committing aggression in a foreign country, U.S. imperialism can only employ part of its forces, which are sent to fight an unjust war far from their native land and therefore have a low morale, and so U.S. imperialism is beset with great difficulties. The people subjected to its aggression are having a trial of strength with U.S. imperialism neither in Washington nor New York, neither in Honolulu nor Florida, but are fighting for independence and freedom on their own soil. Once they are mobilized on a broad scale, they will have inexhaustible strength. Thus superiority will belong not to the United States but to the people subjected to its aggression. The latter, though apparently weak and small, are really more powerful than U.S. imperialism.

"Ping pong diplomacy"–the first break in Chinese-American hostility was the invitation to the U.S. table tennis team to visit China in 1971.

The struggles waged by the different peoples against U.S. imperialism reinforce each other and merge into a torrential world-wide tide of opposition to U.S. imperialism. The more successful the development of people's war in a given region, the larger the number of U.S. imperialist forces that can be pinned down and depleted there. When the U.S. aggressors are hard-pressed in one place, they have no alternative but to loosen their grip on others. Therefore, the conditions become more favorable for the people elsewhere to wage struggles against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. . . .

However highly developed modern weapons and technical equipment may be and however complicated the methods of modern warfare, in the final analysis the outcome of a war will be decided by the sustained fighting of the ground forces, by the fighting at close quarters on battlefields, by the political consciousness of the men, by their courage and spirit of sacrifice. Here the weak points of U.S. imperialism will be completely laid bare, while the superiority of the revolutionary people will be brought into full play. The reactionary troops of U.S. imperialism cannot possibly be endowed with the courage and the spirit of sacrifice possessed by the revolutionary people. The spiritual atom bomb that the revolutionary people possess is a far more powerful and useful weapon than the physical atom bomb.

Vietnam is the most convincing current example of a victim of aggression defeating U.S. imperialism by a people's war. The United States had made South Vietnam a testing ground for the suppression of people's war. It has carried on this experiment for many years, and everybody can now see that the U.S. aggressors are unable to find a way of coping with people's war. On the other hand, the Vietnamese people have brought the power of people's war into full play in their struggle against the U.S. aggressors. The U.S. aggressors are in danger of being swamped in the people's war in Vietnam. They are deeply worried that their defeat in Vietnam will lead to a chain reaction. They are expanding the war in an attempt to save themselves from defeat. But the more they expand the war, the greater will be the chain reaction. The more they escalate the war, the heavier will be their fall and the more disastrous their defeat. The people in other parts of the world will see still more clearly that U.S. imperialism can be defeated, and that what the Vietnamese people can do, they can do too.

History has proved and will go on proving that people's war is the most effective weapon against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. All revolutionary people will learn to wage people's war against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. They will take up arms, learn to fight battles and become skilled in waging people's war, though they have not done so before. U.S. imperialism, like a mad bull dashing from place to place, will finally be burned to ashes in the blazing fires of the people's wars it has provoked by its own actions.

Détente

Editor's Introduction: Lin Piao in his statement calls for violent revolution around the world, as Bundy charged. But nowhere does he call for Chinese conquest or domination. People's wars, by definition, are fought by the native population. But however much Bundy exaggerated Chinese aggressive intentions, there is no question that the Chinese statement is belligerent and not designed to curry favor with the government of the United States.

What happened to change this hostile situation and make the Nixon visit and better relations between the two countries possible?

First of all, the United States began to pull its ground troops out of Indochina so that China no longer feared an invasion from the south. The United States, for its part, recognized that the Chinese were not out to conquer the world.

Second, the United States was willing to state that the future of the island of Taiwan (Formosa) was exclusively a Chinese affair. Taiwan is the island off the China coast to which Chiang K'ai-shek fled after his government was defeated by the Communists in 1949. Chiang's continuing presence there was made possible only by U.S. military forces and supplies. And long after the defeat of Chiang's government on the China mainland, the United States and a number of other governments continued to recognize it as the only

Joint Communiqué (Peking: Foreign Language Press, March, 1972).

China's gift of giant panda bears to the United States in 1972 symbolized a new, friendlier relationship.

legitimate government of China. America's promise to withdraw its troops was a major step toward improved relations.

A third and probably the most important reason for improved U.S.–China relations was the rapidly deteriorating relationship between China and the U.S.S.R. America's fear of a Chinese-Russian alliance in 1949 was one of the major factors shaping our policy toward China. It has now become clear that China and the U.S.S.R. fear each other more than either fears the United States. When [illegible] the early 1970's China perceived the danger of a war with Russia, she had reason to try to improve relations with the United States to prevent a two-front war.

For these and other reasons, Chinese and American statements about each other have lately been rather moderate. The basis for improved relations is set forth in the joint communiqué that was issued at the conclusion of President Nixon's visit to China in February, 1972.

In what respects does it differ from the two statements you read earlier?

PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON of the United States of America visited the People's Republic of China at the invitation of Premier Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China from February 21 to February 28, 1972. Accompanying the President were Mrs. Nixon, U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers, Assistant to the President Dr. Henry Kissinger, and other American officials.

President Nixon met with Chairman Mao Tse-tung of the Communist Party of China on February 21. The two leaders had a serious and frank exchange of views on Sino-U.S. relations and world affairs. . . .

The leaders of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America found it beneficial to have this opportunity, after so many years without contact, to present candidly to one another their views on a variety of issues. They reviewed the international situation in which important changes and great upheavals are taking place and expounded their respective positions and attitudes.

The Chinese side stated: Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. Countries want independence, nations want liberation, and the people want revolution—this has become the irresistible trend of history. All nations, big or small, should be equal; big nations should not bully the small and strong nations should not bully the weak. China will never be a superpower and it opposes hegemony and power politics of any kind. The Chinese side stated that it firmly supports the struggles of all the oppressed people and nations for freedom and liberation and that the people of all countries have the right to choose their social systems according to their own wishes and the right to safeguard the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of their own countries and oppose foreign aggression, interference, control, and subversion. All foreign troops should be withdrawn to their own countries. . . .

The U.S. side stated: Peace in Asia and peace in the world requires efforts both to reduce immediate tensions and to eliminate the basic causes of conflict. The United States will work for a just and secure peace: just, because it fulfills the aspirations of peoples and nations for freedom and progress; secure, because it removes the danger of foreign aggression. The United States supports individual freedom and social progress for all the peoples of the world, free of outside pressure or intervention. The United States believes that the effort to reduce tensions is served by improving communication between countries that have different ideologies, so as to lessen the risks of confrontation through accident, miscalculation, or misunderstanding. Countries should treat each other with mutual respect and be willing to compete peacefully, letting performance be the ultimate judge. No country should claim infallibility and each country should be prepared to re-examine its own attitudes for the common good. . . .

There are essential differences between China and the United States in their social systems and foreign policies. However, the two sides agreed that countries, regardless of their social systems, should conduct their relations on the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, nonaggression against other states, noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. International disputes should be settled on this basis, without resorting to the use or threat of force. The United States and the People's Republic of China are prepared to apply these principles to their mutual relations.

With these principles of international relations in mind the two sides stated that:

—progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interests of all countries;

—both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict;

—neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony; and

—neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states.

Both sides are of the view that it would be against the interests of the peoples of the world for any major country to collude with another against other countries, or for major countries to divide up the world into spheres of interest.

The two sides reviewed the long-standing serious disputes between China and the United States. The Chinese side reaffirmed its position: The Taiwan question is the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations between China and the United States; the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China which has long been returned to the motherland; the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan. The Chinese Government firmly opposes any activities that aim at the creation of "one China, one Taiwan," "one China, two governments," "two Chinas," an "independent Taiwan" or advocate that "the status of Taiwan remains to be determined."

The U.S. side declared: The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.

The two sides agreed that it is desirable to broaden the understanding between the two peoples. To this end, they discussed specific areas in such fields as science, technology, culture, sports, and journalism, in which people-to-people contacts and exchanges would be mutually beneficial. Each side undertakes to facilitate the further development of such contacts and exchanges.

Both sides view bilateral trade as another area from which mutual benefit can be derived, and agreed that economic relations based on equality and mutual benefit are in the interest of the peoples of the two countries. They agree to facilitate the progressive development of trade between their two countries.

The two sides agreed that they will stay in contact through various channels, including the sending of a senior U.S. representative to Peking from time to time for concrete consulta-

Chairman Mao Tse-tung and President Nixon meet on the afternoon of February 21, 1972.

tions to further the normalization of relations between the two countries and continue to exchange views on issues of common interest.

The two sides expressed the hope that the gains achieved during this visit would open up new prospects for the relations between the two countries. They believe that the normalization of relations between the two countries is not only in the interest of the Chinese and American peoples but also contributes to the relaxation of tension in Asia and the world.

President Nixon, Mrs. Nixon, and the American party expressed their appreciation for the gracious hospitality shown them by the Government and people of the People's Republic of China.

Editor's Postscript: Trade and diplomatic relations developed slowly following the Shanghai Communique. Formal diplomatic recognition, with exchange of ambassadors, was not achieved until 1979, under President Carter. But mutual interests in both domestic and foreign affairs have contributed to a steady growth in the relationship.

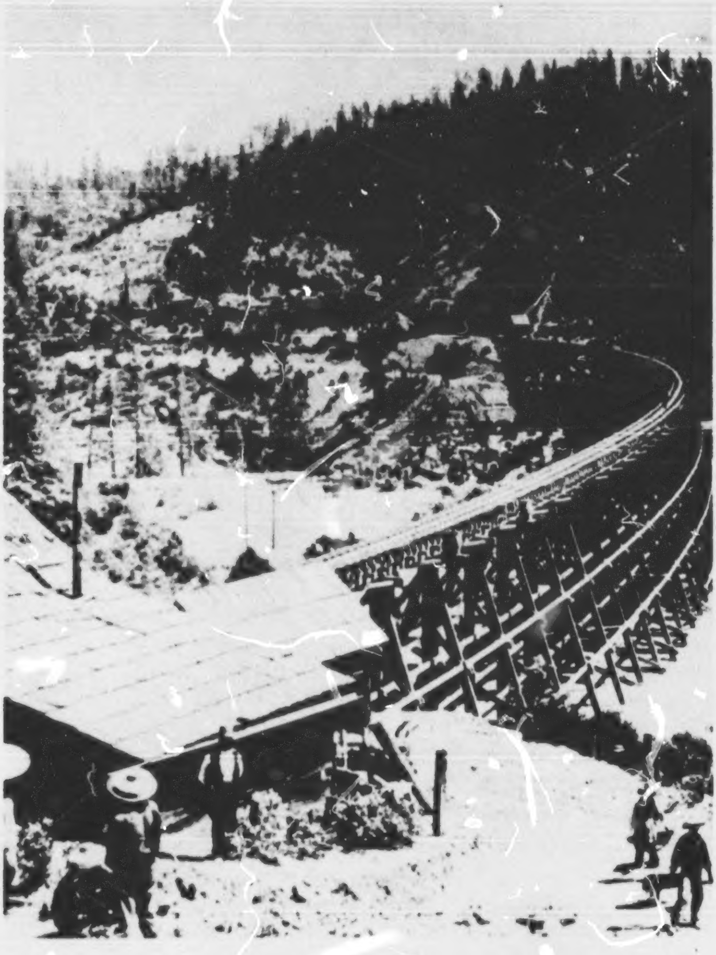
Postscript: America Through Chinese Eyes

Editor's Introduction: Thus far we have viewed China through Chinese eyes. Let us now use the same lens to look at ourselves. How does America appear through the eyes of Chinese Americans? Obviously perceptions vary. But all Chinese Americans share the experience of being an ethnic and racial minority in America. What can we learn about ourselves from them?

Like other groups of immigrants—the Irish, for example—large numbers of Chinese first came to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century to work in the gold mines, help build the railroads, and open up new land. Most of these "coolie" laborers were peasants lured to America by the prospect of earning enough money to break out of the poverty that oppressed their families at home.

At first the Chinese were welcomed in the United States. The demand for labor was great in the newly opened American West. and the Chinese were willing to do jobs that were unpopular with white men who were less financially pressed. But after the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, and as more and more people moved to California, attitudes toward Chinese immigrants began to change. Many Americans wanted to drive the Chinese out. Jobs were hard to find, and many employers preferred hiring Chinese to other laborers. The reason for this is evident in the testimony of a factory proprietor at a U.S. Senate hearing on Chinese immigration. He said he had to pay white male adults $2.25 to $5.00 a day, white children $1.00 a day, and "young Chinamen" only $.90 a day. He added that the Chinese were steadier and more reliable than young whites. Other manufacturers testified that they would have to close up if they could not hire cheap Chinese labor.

Chinese were also used as "scabs" on strikebreakers to counter the efforts of white laborers to organize for higher wages and better working conditions. The result was often mob violence with strong racist overtones. Riots, beatings, and lynchings became commonplace occurrences wherever Chinese were employed. Hatred and fear of Chinese finally resulted in the Exclusion Act of 1882 and other racially discriminatory legislation designed not only to prevent further Chinese immigration but gradually to eliminate



Chinese coolies working on a railroad in the American West in the nineteenth century. (From D. E. Fehrenbacher and N. E. Tutorow, California, An Illustrated History, *New York: Van Nostrand, 1968, p. 70.)*

the Chinese from America altogether. Many Chinese departed the country, and most of those who remained were driven into ghettoes. The readings that follow are taken from interviews conducted in the largest of these ghettoes, San Francisco's Chinatown.

Over the years, attitudes have changed, as has the situation of people of Chinese lineage living in America. Immigration prohibitions were lifted long ago, and, of course, many Chinese no longer live in Chinatowns. A striking example of the difference between generations is apparent in the 1960 census figures for California, which reveal that Chinese Americans had both the highest percentage of college graduates and the highest percentage of illiterates of any ethnic group in the state.

The readings that follow provide a small but diverse sample of life in the United States for Chinese Americans. The speakers are a successful businessman, a working woman, a high school student, and a prizewinning author and playwright.

The Americanization of Johnny Kan

Editor's Introduction: Many Chinese who stayed in America after the Exclusion Act surmounted race prejudice and became successful by American standards. Such was the case of Johnny Kan, who established a luxury restaurant in San Francisco's Chinatown in the 1930s. How did Johnny Kan become successful? How do his attitudes differ from those of his older Chinese partners?

We had a very difficult time growing up. At one time there had been over two thousand Chinese living in Grass Valley and working in the gold mines. But by the time we got up there it had dwindled down to a few hundred. A lot of the men had fallen back on vegetable peddling. . . . You know, it was a rough bunch of characters who came to California to the Mother Lode, and they would treat Chinese as inferior and stone them because we looked different and acted different. So they used to stone the vegetable peddlers, . . . they used to throw stones at us on the way home. Oh, they would wrap rocks in snowballs and throw them at us. Of course, children

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Victor G. Nee and Brett de Bary Nee, *Longtime Californ': A Documentary Study of an American Chinatown* (New York: Pantheon, 1973), pp. 110–16, abridged.

we must forgive, because they were innocent, but at that time it was a very confusing thing for me. . . . [W]hen I was nineteen . . . I was working at a grocery called Sam Hing and Company. . . .

I remember we had an old sign on the window and it wasn't attractive. I wanted to create a better image with a better designed sign and matching stationery and business cards to indicate what we had for sale. So as a partner and assistant manager of the store, as well as the *Choot Fonn*—the English secretary—I took it upon myself to have the sign changed. Now my oldtimer partners in this store had been picking on me a lot, saying we American-born were lazy, we weren't fluent in Chinese, "*Tow-gee jai mo no,* the American-born have no brains." I knew it would be useless to try to discuss my ideas about the sign with them, so I just went ahead and had it done. At the time, nobody said a thing. They barely seemed to notice the change. But at the end of the year, when they were ready to pay out our small dividends, I got hauled in on the sign.

They said, "Now you're taking too much for granted. You're making expenditures without the approval of the rest of the partners." I told them I had thought it was just in the line of duty to repair that sign, to improve the business, and to make progress. . . . But they said, "No, everybody should be consulted. In China, the older the sign, the more venerable and reputable the business is. You have destroyed and taken away . . . our symbol of being long-established." And I said, "Well, this is not China, this is America. And all over the world business people are changing their ideas and their trademarks."

The old sign had said something like this: "SAM HING & CO., Groceries and Peanuts." I had changed it to a better script, and underneath the top line, "SAM HING & CO., Grocers," I put another line "Wholesalers in Peanuts." I thought this was important because . . . it made it clear that our peanut business was in the wholesale class, it wasn't just a store that sold bags of peanuts. Fortunately, something happened to prove me right. A few weeks later my brother, who was between jobs, came to the store to help out and catch some meals. He asked me, "Why don't you advertise in something like *Variety* magazine, or *Show Business* magazine?" I said, "What good will that do?" He said, "You dumb cluck, the circus people read it, too!" So I went and bought a small ad in *Variety*.

Months later a man walked into Sam Hing's and said, "Let me try some of your peanuts." We brought him samples, . . . quoted a price, and finally he chose a brand. He said, "Can you deliver two tons by tomorrow morning?" Two tons! That was practically our whole stock! It turned out this man was a buyer from Ringling Brothers. I was about to tell him it was impossible when my brother started shouting in my ear, "Take it! Everybody roasts peanuts all night long!" So we worked all night and we got the order out. In the morning we drove it, ten sacks at a time, to the circus grounds in our little truck. We shoveled all the peanuts into the big circus trucks, and they sold so well they asked us to come back every day. At the end of the year, when my partners had made such a fuss about that sign, I told them to deduct forty dollars from my salary. But after this order came in, I got my forty dollars back pretty fast.

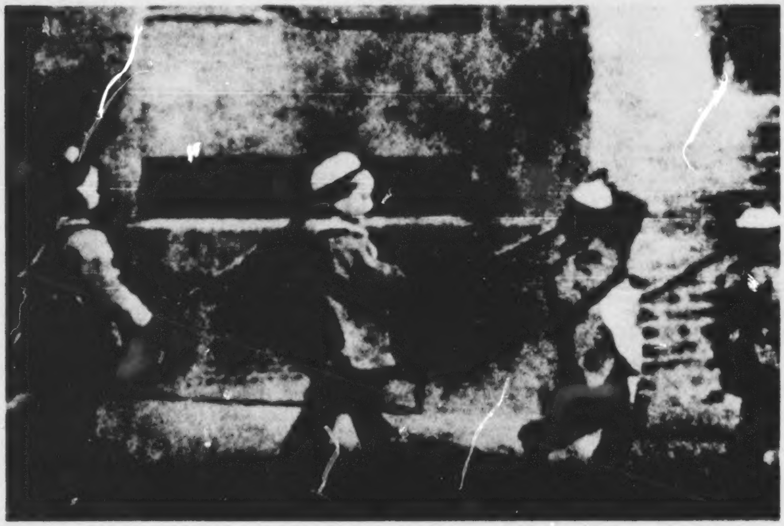
After working at Sam Hing's for eight years, I still didn't see eye to eye with my partners on progress. I thought we should convert the grocery department into a self-service operation, they kept holding back, so finally I left and went to L.A. for a while. When I came back, things were not good in San Francisco in the thirties, and I had to do all kinds of things, janitorial work, dishwashing, cooking, anything to get started again. . . .

Well, by the thirties Chinatown was already becoming a neon-sign salesman's dream with every shop competing for space and gaudiness. I began talking with some friends and joined a little project to restore "Old Chinatown." Our aim was to bring back the old jewelry, slipper, and lantern-manufacturing shops, to make it look like Chinatown before the earthquake and fire, no neon signs, no jazzy commercial appearance. Unfortunately, due to mismanagement, the project flopped. But then I began thinking about something else. I thought back on the success of the Chinese restaurateurs in New York and Chicago in the roaring twenties. They were . . . packing in four to five hundred customers at one seating on Saturday nights. These were the restaurants where many big names in the band business started out—people like Paul Whiteman, Kay Kyser, Paul Tremaine. You know, Chinese from San Francisco would willingly go to New York or Chicago just to work as waiters in these places. The crowds were so large and the tips so good, they wouldn't even ask for salaries!

Also, I had studied the old Mandarin Restaurant here on Bush Street and figured out why it had failed. First, for lack of professional restaurant experience, and second, because it had too many partners—a lethal combination! And finally I realized that the reason there were no first-class restaurants in Chinatown was because no one ever bothered to study, and to teach their employees, how to run a really fine place. And nobody had tried to educate Caucasians to an appreciation of Chinese food. There were over fifty restaurants in Chinatown—papa-mama, medium-sized, juke and soup joints, tenderloin joints, and others—where the waiters just slammed the dishes on the table and cared less about the customer or what he wanted to eat.

So we decided to launch the first efficiency operated . . . Chinese restaurant. Our concept was to have a Ming or Tang dynasty theme for decor, a fine crew of master chefs, and a well-organized dining-room crew headed by a courteous maître d', host, hostesses, and so on. And we topped it all off with a glass-enclosed kitchen. This would serve many purposes. The customers could actually see Chinese food being prepared, and it would encourage everybody to keep the kitchen clean. Also, in those hectic pioneering times, in a party of six or eight persons, there would always be one who disliked Chinese food. No matter what the captain or waiters may say to him, his answer is, "I hate Chinese food, bring me a steak!" Then what?

Well, with our glass-enclosed kitchen, we could say to the difficult guest, "Will you please do us a favor! Come and watch us prepare fresh food and see our *woks* [cooking pans]." It usually took me about fifteen minutes to educate a disliker when I could have him smell the aroma of fresh, barbecued pork coming out of the oven, or sizzling filet of chicken . . . with beautiful, fresh vegetables toss-cooked for just a few seconds. Usually a man like this will end up being a real enthusiast. Why? Because he never knew how real Chinese food was prepared. Now he was no longer a chop suey believer. And of course, in the years since that initial education period, we've introduced our friends to . . . many complex dishes enjoyed by Cantonese people. . . .



Chinese children in nineteenth-century America. (*From William Bronson,* The Earth Shook, the Sky Burned, *Garden City, New York: Doubleday,* 1959.)

I guess I'd say what kept me going in this business, even when there were all the setbacks, was the sense that there was such great potential in it if people are properly trained. I think the restaurant business is something like show business. Now back stage, the chefs may be sweating and arguing with the waiters, and the waiters are arguing with the busboys, and everything is clanging away. But when they come out to the dining room everyone smiles. The maître d' greets you, the waiter bows, the cocktail girls are very gracious. It's what they call being a trooper, you see. . . .

The Exploitation of Jennie Lew

Editor's Introduction: With the expansion of the American economy following World War II, many Chinese began moving out of Chinatowns and entering professional and white-collar jobs. According to the Nees, California's 1960 census figures "attributed to American Chinese both the highest percentage of college-educated and the highest percentage of near-illiterate population of any ethnic group in the state."

Even for the highly trained and educated Chinese, however, a lingering racial prejudice often kept them from rising above middle-level jobs. For recent immigrants, the situation has often been far worse, as the following account indicates. What conditions contributed to the exploitation of Jennie Lew? Is hers a case of racial discrimination? How does she find relief?

JENNIE TALKS TO us with her oldest daughter, a thin and nervous girl of twenty, and two boys in the room. She says she began working in the garment factories about fifteen years ago, when Donna got old enough to keep an eye on the younger ones. Of course, she worked off and on, she says. She'd stop for four or five months whenever a new child was born, and her health hasn't been too good, so she had to take time out for that. In all, she worked in three different garment factories until she stopped. She had worked in the last place, on Powell Street, for seven years, making men's shirts. . . .

She followed pretty much the same schedule every day while she was working. She'd get up at seven and make breakfast for her husband and the kids. She'd walk the older ones to school, go to the factory at nine, and work for two hours. . . . At eleven, she'd pick the kids up from school, make lunch for them at home, walk them back to school, and be at work again at one. At five, she would take another hour off to cook

Nee and Nee, *op. cit.*, pp. 290–95, abridged.

supper for everybody. At six or six-thirty she'd go back to work again, sew until ten, then come home to bed. On Saturday she would put in about five hours and take home something to sew on Sunday. She was paid by piece-rate, not by the hour, earning between $4.50 to $8 per dozen, depending on the complexity of the pattern.

We ask Jennie what the shop was like and she says . . . there were about thirty machines in the shop. It was noisy because there were so many people running motors, but the main thing is that it was messy: an old building, no one painted or dusted the walls. . . .

Jennie says she didn't expect to do work like this when she was a girl. In fact, she never liked sewing. "But that's the only thing we know how to do when we get here. It's the only kind of job we can get." Donna says Jennie is impatient and she used to scream at them sometimes when she got fed up with sewing. . . . "After a while, we just turn off on it when she starts yelling like that. You get the feeling she couldn't control anything about her life, and it makes you feel awful.". . .

Jennie had always been paid by piece-rate, but in the years since she had begun at Powell Street, the effort to unionize the Chinatown shops had intensified. Chinatown wage levels had been exposed and become the center of a bitter, citywide controversy.

In 1963, when she began working for him, Kim Wah Lee informed her that a prerequisite for maintaining her position as a worker at his shop would be that she, like the other workers, fill out a biweekly time card certifying that her wages came up to the standard for the state minimum wage of $1.65 per hour. He instructed the women in the following procedure: as before, their wages would be piece-rate, calculated according to the number of pieces completed, not the number of hours worked. They would, as before, hand in a slip for every dozen garments completed. But at the end of every two-week period, Kim Wah Lee would give them a separate time card to take home and fill out, showing, as federal law requires, not the number of pieces completed, but the number of hours worked. With each time card, he would enclose a brief note of instruction stating precisely the number of hours to be filled in on the time card. The number was, of course, not calculated on the basis of a record of actual hours worked, but by dividing the actual amount the woman had earned by the state minimum wage. If she worked eighty hours and earned fifty dollars in two weeks, she was instructed to fill out the time card to show a total of no more than 30 hours, at which rate her pay for the two-week period would appear to fulfill the minimum wage of $1.65 per hour.

Jennie said for a while she didn't understand why she was being asked to do this. After a few months, her husband noticed her working out figures on the card every two weeks. He began to blow up whenever she brought the time card home. . . . "You're not supposed to fill in your own time card!" He urged her to quit and look for another job. But she was convinced she couldn't find work outside of the garment industry, and she needed money. She and most of the other women were aware they were being cheated. "That was obvious, but what could we do? Most of us can't speak English. Even if a few of us wanted to start something, like file a petition, we couldn't get support from the others. People are hesitant about starting anything, because they can lose their positions so easily. So no one wants to stir things up, you know.". . .

In the summer of 1968, Jennie began going to the North Beach health clinic complaining of dizzy spells, headaches, backaches, and general fatigue. Her health deteriorated through the fall and winter, and in the following spring the doctor advised her to stop work for an indefinite period of time. Because she was anxious about losing . . . income, Jennie hesitated for several months. . . . In late June, Jennie developed mononucleosis and was hospitalized for three weeks. She took sick leave from work for another month.

In August, when she decided to apply for unemployment insurance, she was told that she needed a letter from her employer stating the reason for her inability to continue work. Jennie took the form to the shop. Her boss refused to sign it and told her her sickness was all in her head. Jennie says she xploded. "There's no other way to explain what happened. I was just fed up. Before I even thought about what I was saying, I told him if he didn't fill out that card for me, I would sue him for all the hours he'd never paid me in four years. He just said, 'Go right ahead,' and told me to leave the shop." Jennie went home and collected the receipts of the paychecks she had received in the year period before she had to leave work. In the period between August 19, 1967, and June 22, 1968, she earned $969.00.

It was difficult to get Jennie to explain the steps which led her to become the first garment worker in Chinatown history who successfully won a court battle against her employer in 1971. She says it was not her husband's pressure which led to the decision, it was just the rage that built up in herself. . . . She went to the Economic Opportunity Office on Stockton Street, where she had learned to come for food stamps, and someone on the staff advised her to discuss her case with the ILGWU (International Ladies Garment Workers Union) office on Howard Street. The union urged Jennie to prosecute the case, and referred her to the Chinatown–North Beach Neighborhood Legal Assistance Office. For two years, Jennie and a young lawyer in the office put together the evidence on the case. Jennie was able to produce several time cards, with the usual biweekly instructions on them; these became critical evidence in the case. Neither her lawyer nor Jennie was able to obtain the agreement of any other women in the shop to testify in court. Jennie's two youngest children, however, were able to provide evidence of overtime work by giving the hours of the day and the times of the week when their mother was away from home.

The lawyer stressed that he felt legal blame for Jennie's experience did not rest only on the proprietor of her shop. "Legally, this Chinese contractor . . . was merely an extension of the manufacturing company downtown.". . . He says he approached the downtown firm about the case, but they were so anxious to keep it out of court and out of the public eye that they offered to settle all expenses themselves. Since he felt the success of a court case might be one of the biggest breakthroughs possible for workers in the Chinatown industry, he and Jennie went on to court. After seven months they won a settlement. Jennie received $2,100 in back pay for the five-year period, plus a $1,650 punitive fee which was imposed on her employer.

In the spring of 1970, when she was well enough to look for work again, Jennie found a new job. She is now a maid in a large hotel . . . outside Chinatown. It's hard work, she has to get up even earlier now to be down there on time. But her work hours are a regular forty-hour week, the pay is $2.25 an hour, and she has a paid two-week vacation and sick leave. Jennie says she would never work in the garment factory again.

The Politicization of Clifford Fong

Editor's Introduction: The next selection, by a high school student, reveals a new attitude that has arisen among many young Chinese Americans since the mid-1960s. What does Clifford Fong see as the reason for Chinese American problems? Does he have a solution?

ONE OF THE biggest problems we used to have, you know, was that the white man didn't recognize us as having any problems at all. Because, like we have some of the best restaurants in the city here, we have fancy shops, we have bus tours going through here, you know. There's no bus tours going through Harlem or Watts. Because the people, even the outside white people, know what's happening down there, what they read and what they see on TV has a lot to do with it. But what they read and what they see on TV about Chinatown, you know, it's a clean place where everybody's happy, and there's no trouble. And that means a lot of people are getting screwed up down here and don't receive no help. So that was, you know, one of the biggest jobs. Just to let the outside people know what's happening.

Like the tourists, tourists in Chinatown are important for all the money, but it's just that the money don't benefit all the

Nee and Nee, *op. cit.*, pp. 345–48, abridged.

people. It benefits the businesses, see. You know, if you're rich, you're very rich, if you're poor, it just keeps on going like that. I think the tourists come in to use, to take advantage of the way Chinatown is set up. You know, it's cheaper than other places and even the so-called white hippies can afford to come down. Like they made this, I don't know, one of the hippie papers made this pamphlet "How to Live in San Francisco" and they list a lot of Chinatown restaurants, the cheapest place you can go for a good meal. So a lot of tourists just come down and they expect the Chinese to wait on them, serve them hand and foot. They expect all the Chinese to be what they see in the magazines and the cartoons, you know. . . .

It used to be humble, docile, you know, hardworking, industrious, you know, little man that never starts any trouble. The white man looks upon the Chinese as very humble, a short little guy with buck tooth, glasses, round thick glasses or something like that. Isn't masculine at all as far as the guys are concerned. And they all like to work hard, never start no trouble. And I guess in San Francisco things are a little bit more liberal, but maybe in the Midwest or the South there are some people that never saw a Chinese in their whole life. Or some kids that only saw Chinese on TV where we acted as butlers, waiters, houseboys. Even in the movies that were made on the Chinese, or the Japanese war movies, like there's the white American sergeant six feet tall, you know, John Wayne type, and then the little Japanese soldiers so small that ten of them couldn't take on John Wayne even though they all got guns. And that's all the white man sees. Well, like I said, last year we begin speaking up a little bit more and maybe in San Francisco at least maybe white people are awakening a little bit.

As far as a lot of the youth is concerned, when the tourists come down they expect us to act like our stereotype, especially the youth. Cause we're supposed to be well behaved and everything. And then when they see all the so-called juvenile delinquents standing on Jackson Street, you know, they're shocked. Because a lot of tourists think they can come down and take advantage of our humbleness and stupidity in being docile, never defending ourselves, and especially like the guys being unmasculine and everything, and they think they can get away with pushing the Chinese around and they'll never fight back. That's why a lot of these tourists come down here and when they get wise or something then the street kids get in trouble with them. You know, they're real resentful of any white man who would take advantage of them. So that's why a lot of white men get their ass kicked when they come down. . . .

Because I think like the main thing is the economic exploitation of all the people, you know. Especially when it comes to Chinese because again that stereotype of we're supposed to work hard and keep our mouths shut and it doesn't matter what you get paid. A lot of white businessmen take advantage of this. Richer Chinese take advantage of poor Chinese. Even if a guy owns a restaurant making thousands of dollars, he'll still pay that dishwasher fifty cents an hour. Which goes back to the old thing they say in China, the plain greed of the businessman. Why not if you can get away with it? Why pay the guy a dollar if he takes fifty cents? So that's why a lot of people are suffering in Chinatown and a lot of people are getting rich, too.

Well, you know, whenever I talk about white as exploiting and all that I don't mean the white race, I mean white America. That's a pretty big difference to me. And you know it's not a lot of white people doing the exploiting and everything, but as far as I'm concerned all white people are to blame because all white people are ignorant of the things that are going on. And if you're ignorant you don't care what's happening. There are a lot of poor whites that are getting ripped off, too, in this country, that's true. But this is a pretty rich country, so in the end a lot of it has to do with our race. A poor white will get work easier than a poor black or an immigrant just because of the color of the skin. . . .

Yeah, I think a lot of what's going on back in China. I think communism is good for that country, China. Because when they had kings and all that, or when the Nationalists were running the country, the majority of the people were suffering. I think Mao's government is helping out the people more and that's good. But that doesn't necessarily mean that communism will work here. It's a different thing altogether, people think differently, live differently. So it's good for China, but you can't say it's good for the United States.

An Emerging Chinese-American Sensibility

Editor's Introduction: Our final selection is an interview with Frank Chin, a writer whose works have appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies and who won an award for his play ***Chickencoop Chinaman.***

In the first part of the interview Chin is describing an experience in Iowa, where he was a Fellow at the State University. What does Frank Chin realize about himself and other Chinese Americans? What is the significance of the incident with his father? What does he see as his role in life?

EVERYONE THERE treated me like a foreigner, including the Chinese students, because I was a foreigner to them, and that got very depressing. The only place I could get a job was in the Chinese restaurant in this town. Getting a place to live, well, this professor befriended me, found me a room, and took me over to see the landlady. The landlady came out and I was smoking. The guy said, "You better put your cigarette out, she might not approve." I'd just started the cigarette so I bent over, pinched it out, and I was putting it back in my pocket, kind of hunched over, and I look up, this lady is bowing to me. I look at the professor, he kind of shrugs, so I bow, and he bows.

She says, "Is this him?" "Yes, this is Frank Chin and this is Mrs. So and So." I say, "How do you do, Mrs. So and So." She says, "Oh, he speaks English!" "Yes, I do, Mrs. So and So." She says, "What's his name?" "My name is Frank, ma'am." "Oh, well, that's only your American name." And I had to admit that's probably all it was, you know. "Yeah, it's only my American name." And I'm getting really tired of this. Then she says, "You speak very fluent English!" "Thank you, ma'am." "Oh, what part of China are you from?"

"I'm from San Francisco, ma'am." Rather than put her

Nee and Nee, *op. cit.*, pp. 380–89, abridged.

down and say, "You dumb bitch, I'm not from China." But she goes on, "How long have you been in this country?" You know, that was her mental set: all Chinese are foreigners, therefore San Francisco is in China. I said, "Well, I've been here twenty years or so." And she said, "You should speak good English, then!" And I said, "Yes, I should, shouldn't I?"

She took me to one end of the room. "Do you like this rug?" "No, I don't like this rug." "That rug okay?" "Yeah, that rug's okay." She said, "Are you going to do any cooking?" I said, "Yeah, I've been known to do a little cooking so I can eat every now and again." She said, "All right, I'll bring you some things. I know, Chinese like to make a mess when they cook, don't they?" I said no, I didn't know that. She said, "Oh, yes, I've been to the Philippines and I know that when Chinese cook they like to have a big mess. I'll just bring you some cloth to wipe off the stove each time you cook." I said, "O.K. You bring me the cloth and I'll wipe the stove with it. Gladly, gladly." She says, "Well, here we call it 'rags.'" "Oh, 'rags.' Cu-lean-ing rrrrags." "Excuse me. Cu-lean-ing rrrrags." I'm looking at her and she's staring me in the face, mouthing the words "cleaning rags," and I realize I'm being given a lesson in English. . . .

But the thing taught me something, you know. That I was Chinese-American, whatever that meant. That I was not an individual, not just a human being. A human being in this culture, in this society, is a white man, he can disappear. I couldn't disappear, no matter how enlightened I was, no matter how straight my English was. Someone, just because they saw my skin color, would detect an accent. Someone would always correct me. And well, then I began to look at my writing, what I'd been writing about in my letters and everything was just to this point. The Chinese-American, well, schizophrenia. That I'd been playing a kind of ping-pong game, you know. Now I'm Chinese, now I'm American. But up against real Chinese in this isolated setting I saw that I had nothing in common with them. That they didn't understand me, and I didn't understand them. We both used chopsticks, okay, that's recognizable. But that's mechanics, not culture. On a personal gut level that doesn't make us brothers. . . .

What I value most, I guess, is what I'm doing, trying to legitimize the Chinese-American sensibility. Call it my accident in time and space and that all the talent, everything I have is good only for this. Nothing else is any good until I get this done or started. And if I can't legitimize it, or if Chinese-American sensibility isn't legitimized, then my writing is no good. . . .

Deep down I really don't think anything's going to come of this. I think I'll end up like a certain relative of mine, looked on as a bum by my family, selling newspapers on the corner of Grant and Washington. Like, you know, the only choice I see for me is, well, am I going to be a bum in Chinatown or outside of Chinatown?

The diabolical Chinese, from the MGM film "Mr. Wu" (1927). (From Harold Isaacs, Scratches on Our Minds, *New York: John Day, 1958, p. 240.)*

In my family, and among Chinese, the question of just physical survival is almost of paramount importance. How do you live? By their terms I'll never grow up, I'll never make a lot of money. I know I'd feel a lot worse if I took some crummy job and gave up my writing, because I've tried that, and it just did not work. At the same time this is my sense of guilt, that I do feel bad when my family looks on me as a failure, that I disgust them. That as far as they're concerned I'm some sort of weirdo charity case. And even if I succeed, I will have failed them.

I identify with my father. My father tried, in his own way he tried as hard as I am to make it in his terms in this country. Yeah, I think he failed and I think he thinks he's failed. But in his eyes I'm irresponsible. I'm fooling around and I'm an insult to him. He was president of the Six Companies, I've insulted him there. There was one time I came down from Seattle, you know, I was dressed just like this but he loves me, I'm his son, and he took me out to get some clams. He knows I love clams. And we were at *Sun Tõi Sam Yuen* on Jackson Street and a bunch of his buddies were there. We were in a booth, and I had long, long hair then. They recognized him but they didn't see me. So they came over, shook hands with him, said a few words. But when they saw me they wouldn't acknowledge me, didn't even ask who I was. Before, when I was a little neater they would say something, or shake my hand. But they didn't acknowledge me, and I saw my father die. And there's nothing I can do for the guy. I felt terrible for him, I was breaking his heart. I guess for him it was a very noble moment, do or die maintaining himself as my father even though it meant insult. So they came by, and the wives came by one at a time and there I was with my pile of clams.

We live in different worlds. And when my world comes in contact with his we just destroy each other. I look at the way he tunes the television set, it's all wrong. The people look like they're dead. They come on looking dingy, gray, the color of Roquefort cheese. But that's the way he sees the world. And he lives in Chinatown, so it's in Chinatown, his world. And he can't see that it's partly my world, too. So, you know, I'll never have his respect. And I could win a Nobel . . . prize, you know, and prove that my writing's been worthwhile and he'll say, "You dress like a bum." And then I see that I've broken the guy's heart. So I feel bad about that.

Asian Students: A Success Story

Editor's Introduction: The experiences of Chinese-Americans, like the experiences of all immigrant groups in the U.S., have undergone changes over time. The blatant discrimination against Jennie Lew, or the sense of alienation of Clifford Fong, or the feeling of Frank Chin that he was a failure in his father's eyes are not typical of most young Chinese-Americans today. Indeed, Chinese-American students, as well as children of Korean and Japanese parents, are doing extremely well by any standards.

The following selection, written in 1981, describes the high school academic performance of Asian-American students in the Washington, D.C. area and nationwide. What accounts for the success of these students? What role does their parents' traditional culture play in this success?

Although his mother speaks to him mostly in Korean, she taught him how to read in English when he was only 4.

By the time he reached junior high, while other boys played after school, he usually studied or practiced the piano.

Last month Victor You, 17, whose parents come from Korea, graduated as valedictorian from the selective St. Albans School in Northwest Washington, D.C. He had the highest grades in his class, took four college-level courses, won the school's music award, and was a National Merit

Lawrence Feinberg, "Asian Students Excelling in Area, U.S. Schools," *The Washington Post*, July 12, 1981. © 1981 by The Washington Post Company. Reprinted by permission.

Scholarship finalist. This fall he is heading to Harvard University.

"My parents always taught us to excel so we would never be in the position of being bossed around," You said. "We know we are a minority in this country, and we have to do better than other Americans . . . . That's the only way we'll get ahead."

At Anacostia High School, where virtually all students are black and poor in contrast to St. Albans, where most are white and well-to-do, this year's valedictorian is also Asian American, Chin Wah Lee, 17, who was born in Hong Kong.

"In Asia a scholar is revered," Lee said, "and my parents felt I should do well in school. That's the only way to get ahead . . . . It seems like a lot of students have a sense of apathy toward schoolwork. They don't seem to care. [But] when you first come over there is a need to prove you can succeed. People who are born here don't have that need anymore."

You and Lee—their schools sharply different, their drive almost the same—are part of a widespread pattern of Asian students doing exceptionally well both locally and across the country.

Even though Asians are a minority of less than 3 percent in the Washington area, Asian names cropped up often on this spring's lists of top-ranking local high school graduates.

On standardized tests in Montgomery County, Maryland, Asians scored higher than any racial group. Their composite scores last year were slightly above whites in every grade tested.

Nationally, in a major survey of high school students sponsored by the U.S. Education Department, Asians had far higher scores in mathematics than any other group, including whites, blacks, Hispanics and American Indians. Whites were the highest by a smaller margin in reading and vocabulary.

Overall, Asian seniors came out slightly ahead, even though, according to the survey, which was directed by University of Chicago sociologist James Coleman, about 58 percent of the Asian students were foreign born. About 14.5

These students are among the top scholars in the 1981 graduating class at T. C. Williams High School in Alexandria, VA. Although Asians make up only 7 percent of the school's enrollment, four of the top 12 students in the senior class were Asian.

percent were identified as limited English-speaking.

The study also showed that the Asian students did more homework and took more tough courses. Far more of their parents, it reported, expected them to go beyond college for advanced degrees.

"It's a classic story of a group making it through the educational system," said Stephan Thernstrom, a history professor at Harvard and editor of the Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups. "Asians have done well in California schools since the 1930s. Now they're in many more parts of the country, and they're doing well elsewhere too.

"They seem to have an orientation that's attuned to doing well in American schools. . . . They save. They devote a great deal of attention to their children. They do well."

Of the students admitted to Harvard's freshman class next fall, one of the toughest to get into in the nation, Asian Americans account for 8.9 percent. This is almost six times higher than the proportion of Asians in the American population, which was 1.5 percent in the 1980 census.

At the University of California at Berkeley, 20 percent of undergraduates are of Asian origin, while Asians account for 5.2 percent of California residents. To be eligible for Berkeley students must be in the top 12.5 percent of their high school class. A recent study showed that 39 percent of Asians graduating from California secondary schools did that well, compared with 16.5 percent of whites, 5 percent of blacks, and 4.7 percent of Hispanics.

On a more advanced level, according to a study by the National Academy of Sciences, Asians account for 6.6 percent of all scientists in the United States with doctoral degrees, including 15.5 percent of those in engineering and 9.3 percent in computer science.

"I wish I had a school full of Asian kids," said Anthony Hanley, the principal of T.C. Williams Senior High in Alexandria, Virginia, where Asians make up 7 percent of enrollment but accounted for four of the top 12 students in last month's graduating class. "They're polite. They're hard workers. They're wonderful kids . . . .

"Oh, they're not all perfect always," Hanley continued. "But we've had almost no problems with discipline with them. A lot of the homes are poor. They left everything behind when they came here. But they have this incredible drive to succeed. They're very serious about their studies, and they have a very strong respect for the teachers."

Hanley added that "there is a sense of a little jealousy that these foreigners can just come into the school and after a while they're at the top of the class. It's resented a little. But these Asian kids, they're such workers. They work incredibly hard."

Although the hard work is obvious, exactly why many Asians work so hard in school is uncertain. So are the other reasons underlying their academic success. The main factors cited by historians and sociologists are similar to those given by the students themselves: the high value placed on scholarship in Asian societies, a strong family structure to transmit this value, and the history of discrimination against Asians in the United States, which has caused them to stress education as an open channel to high-status jobs and acceptance.

The same combination of factors is often given to explain the academic success of American Jews, who are also heavily represented on scholastic honors lists and in prestigious universities, said William Petersen, a retired University of California sociologist. Petersen, who wrote a major study of Japanese Americans, said the strong push by Asians to do well in schools now is "fairly comparable to the Jewish drive for excellence, particularly a generation or so ago when many Jews were immigrants and really pushed their kids to excel."

Indeed, a widespread Japanese stereotype with a considerable element of truth, Petersen said, is the *kyoiku-mama*—the "education mama" who is strikingly similar to the stereotyped "Jewish mother," lavishing attention on her children, pushing and helping them to do well in school, and gaining much of her own satisfaction from their success.

"It's a great stereotype," said Harvard's Thernstrom. "And it usually is effective—no matter who uses it."

Although it has lessened recently, discrimination against Asians in the United States often has been severe. On the West Coast, where Asians first settled as "coolie" laborers, farm workers, servants and laundrymen, there was considerable agitation against the "yellow peril," which led to Jim Crow-like laws, Thernstrom said. These served to limit voting, land-holding, and racial intermarriage by Asians. Often their housing was segregated and some communities placed them in segregated schools.

During World War II, 120,000 Japanese-Americans on the West Coast were placed behind barbed wire in internment camps.

The racial prejudice has steeply declined since then, Thernstrom said, but like blacks, Asians remain a visibly distinct minority and most Asian students interviewed for this article recalled sometimes being taunted by other children, usually with the epithet "chink." In addition, Thernstrom said, many Asians have faced problems with English similar to those of many Hispanics.

Because of discrimination, Asians generally have been placed with blacks, Hispanics and American Indians in affirmative action plans and other special programs for minorities. Yet, unlike the other groups whose test scores, graduation rates, and representation in tough academic programs all are substantially below white averages, Asians have done at least as well as whites in virtually all academic areas.

"It's absurd that Orientals qualify for affirmative action," Thernstrom said, "but it makes the programs work" because Asians generally have strong records. Indeed, at Harvard, which boasts in a house organ that next fall's freshman class has a "record high percentage (22.88) of minority students," slightly more Asian Americans were admitted than blacks even though there are seven times more blacks than Asians in the United States.

At Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which has more than twice as many Asians as blacks, Asians are not included in the school's minority admissions programs. "Asians are not considered to be a minority," MIT news director Robert Byers said. "They are not underrepresented."

Several "minority fellowship programs," sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences, also exclude Asians on the same grounds.

"They don't need it," said one NSF administrator. "They're able to do it on their own. The other people need some more help to make it."

Although Asian organizations have fought hard to keep Asians eligible for minority-preference programs, particularly for government contracts, several of the students interviewed said they did not want their race to be considered in admitting them to college. They added that they thought counting by race might hurt Asians because in proportion to their small numbers there are "too many" Asians in many good universities.

"The colleges sent me all this minority stuff and I felt insulted," said Teresa Chen, who graduated with a straight-A average from High Point Senior High and is going to Brown in the fall. "You get the feeling that they weren't interested in me because I'm me but because I'm a minority . . . They treated me as if I was handicapped. It never occurred to me that I was handicapped because I was Chinese."

In fact, like many of the students interviewed, Chen said she thought being Asian actually helped her do well in school. "My parents are very strict by American standards," she said, "and they really taught us to believe that education is the way to succeed in life. They're proud of the fact that we [Chinese] have been educated and taking tests for thousands of years" for admission to the mandarin class of powerful civil servants.

While they are still a small minority, the number of Asians in the United States grew from 1.5 million to 3.5 million between 1970 and 1980, as the repeal of exclusionary immigration laws allowed the entry of skilled Asian workers, professionals and anticommunist refugees. Most of the newcomers were from Vietnam, China (the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), Korea and the Philippines.

Victor You, the valedictorian at St. Albans, said his father is an economist with the World Bank, his mother a chemist who gave up her career to raise two sons. When he was young, he recalled, his mother "would bake a cake every time I read a book to encourage me. I had to do well for her."

Chin Wah Lee, Anacostia's valedictorian, said both his parents work, his father as a cook in a Chinese restaurant, his mother as a dishwasher. Even though the family could clearly use the money, Lee said his parents did not want him to have a job after school. Instead, they encouraged him to take courses at George Washington University while he was still a high school senior, which involved two round trips a day by bus and subway—about three hours of commuting.

"They felt I should do well in school," Lee said, "and spend time studying, not working . . . . They see me as their future. They want me to get ahead."